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PROSE SELECTIONS

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Prose Selections

William Paley (1743-1805)

HAPPINESS

The word happy is a relative term ; that is, when we call a man happy, we mean that he is happier than some others with whom we compare him, than the generality of others, or than he himself was in some other situation :—thus, speaking of one who has just compassed the object of a long pursuit, ‘ Now,’ we say, ‘ he is happy.’ And in a like comparative sense, compared, that is, with the general lot of mankind, we call a man happy who possesses health and competency.

In strictness, any condition may be denominated happy, in which the amount or aggregate of pleasure exceeds that of pain ; and the degree of happiness depends upon the quantity of this excess.

And the greatest quantity of it ordinarily attainable in human life is what we mean by happiness, when we inquire or pronounce what human happiness consists in.

In which inquiry I will omit much usual declamation on the dignity and capacity of our nature ; the superiority of the soul to the body, of the rational to

the animal part of our constitution ; upon the worthiness, refinement, and delicacy of some satisfactions, or the meanness, grossness, and sensuality of others ;—because I hold that pleasures differ in nothing but in continuance and intensity ; from a just computation of which, confirmed by what we observe of the apparent cheerfulness, tranquillity, and contentment of men of different tastes, tempers, stations, and pursuits, every question concerning human happiness must receive its decision.

It will be our business to show, if we can—

I. What human happiness does not consist in ;

II. What it does consist in.

I. First, then, happiness does not consist in the pleasures of sense, in whatever profusion or variety they be enjoyed. By the pleasures of sense I mean as well the animal gratifications of eating, drinking, and that by which the species is continued ; as the more refined pleasures of music, painting, architecture, gardening, splendid shows, theatric exhibitions ; and the pleasures, lastly, of active sports,—as of hunting, shooting, fishing, etc. For,—

1. These pleasures continue but a little while at a time. This is true of them all, especially of the grosser sort of them. Laying aside the preparation and the expectation, and computing strictly the actual sensation, we shall be surprised to find how inconsiderable a portion of our time they occupy—how few hours in the four-and-twenty they are able to fill up.

2. These pleasures, by repetition, lose their relish. It is a property of the machine, for which we know no remedy, that the organs by which we perceive

pleasure are blunted and benumbed by being frequently exercised in the same way. There is hardly any one who has not found the difference between a gratification when new and when familiar; or any pleasure which does not become indifferent as it grows habitual.

3. The eagerness for high and intense delights takes away the relish from all others; and as such delights fall rarely in our way, the greater part of our time becomes from this cause empty and uneasy.

There is hardly any delusion by which men are greater sufferers in their happiness than by their expecting too much from what is called pleasure; that is, from those intense delights which vulgarly engross the name of pleasure. The very expectation spoils them. When they do come, we are often engaged in taking pains to persuade ourselves how much we are pleased, rather than enjoying any pleasure which springs naturally out of the object. And whenever we depend upon being vastly delighted, we always go home secretly grieved at missing our aim. Likewise, as has been observed just now, when this humour of being prodigiously delighted has once taken hold of the imagination, it hinders us from providing for, or acquiescing in, those gently soothing engagements, the due variety and succession of which are the only things that supply a vein or continued stream of happiness.

What I have been able to observe of that part of mankind whose professed pursuit is pleasure, and who are withheld in the pursuit by no restraints of fortune or scruples of conscience, corresponds sufficiently with this account. I have commonly remarked in such men a restless and inextinguishable passion for variety; a great part of their time to be

vacant, and so much of it irksome; and that, with whatever eagerness and expectation they set out, they become by degrees fastidious in their choice of pleasure, languid in the enjoyment, yet miserable under the want of it.

The truth seems to be, that there is a limit at which these pleasures soon arrive, and from which they ever afterwards decline. They are by necessity of short duration, as the organs cannot hold on their emotions beyond a certain length of time; and if you endeavour to compensate for this imperfection in their nature by the frequency with which you repeat them, you suffer more than you gain; by the fatigue of the faculties and the diminution of sensibility.

We have said nothing in this account of the loss of opportunities, or the decay of faculties; which, whenever they happen, leave the voluptuary destitute and desperate—teased by desires that can never be gratified, and the memory of pleasures which must return no more.

It will also be allowed by those who have experienced it, and perhaps by those alone, that pleasure which is purchased by the incumbrance of our fortune is purchased too dear; the pleasure never compensating for the perpetual irritation of embarrassed circumstances.

These pleasures, after all, have their value; and as the young are always too eager in their pursuit of them, the old are sometimes too remiss; that is, too studious of their ease to be at the pains for them which they really deserve.

Secondly, Neither does happiness consist in an exemption from pain, labour, care, business, suspense,

molestation, and 'those evils which are without'; such a state being usually attended not with ease, but with depression of spirits, a tastelessness in all our ideas, imaginary anxieties, and the whole train of hypochondriacal affections.

For which reason the expectations of those who retire from their shops and counting-houses, to enjoy the remainder of their days in leisure and tranquillity, are seldom answered by the effect; much less of such as, in a fit of chagrin, shut themselves up in cloisters and hermitages, or quit the world and their stations in it for solitude and repose.

Where there exists a known external cause of uneasiness, the cause may be removed, and the uneasiness will cease; but those imaginary distresses which men feel for want of real ones (and which are equally tormenting, and so far equally real), as they depend upon no single or assignable subject of uneasiness, admit oftentimes of no application or relief.

Hence a moderate pain, upon which the attention may fasten and spend itself, is to many a refreshment; as a fit of the gout will sometimes cure the spleen. And the same of any less violent agitation of the mind; as a literary controversy, a law-suit, a contested election, and, above all, gaming—the passion for which, in men of fortune and liberal minds, is only to be accounted for on this principle.

Thirdly, Neither does happiness consist in greatness, rank, or elevated station.

Were it true that all superiority afforded pleasure, it would follow that by how much we were the greater—that is, the more persons we were superior to—in the same proportion, so far as depended upon

this cause, we should be the happier; but so it is, that no superiority yields any satisfaction, save that which we possess or obtain over those with whom we immediately compare ourselves. The shepherd perceives no pleasure in his superiority over his dog; the farmer, in his superiority over the shepherd; the lord, in his superiority over the farmer; nor the king, lastly, in his superiority over the lord. Superiority, where there is no competition, is seldom contemplated—what most men are quite unconscious of.

But if the same shepherd can run, fight, or wrestle better than the peasants of his village; if the farmer can show better cattle, if he keeps a better horse, or be supposed to have a longer purse, than any farmer in the hundred; if the lord have more interest in an election, greater favour at court, a better house or larger estate than any nobleman in the country; if the king possess a more extensive territory, a more powerful fleet or army, a more splendid establishment, more loyal subjects, or more weight and authority in adjusting the affairs of nations, than any prince in Europe—in all these cases the parties feel an actual satisfaction in their superiority.

Now the conclusion that follows from hence is this,—that the pleasures of ambition, which are supposed to be peculiar to high stations, are in reality common to all conditions. The farrier who shoes a horse better, and who is in greater request for his skill, than any man within ten miles of him, possesses, for all that I can see, the delight of distinction and of excelling, as truly and substantially as the statesman, the soldier, and the scholar, who

have filled Europe with the reputation of their wisdom, their valour, or their knowledge.

No superiority appears to be of any account but superiority over a rival. This, it is manifest, may exist wherever rivalships do; and rivalships fall out amongst men of all ranks and degrees. The object of emulation, the dignity or magnitude of this object, makes no difference; as it is not what either possesses that constitutes the pleasure, but what one possesses more than the other.

Philosophy smiles at the contempt with which the rich and great speak of the petty strifes and competitions of the poor; not reflecting that these strifes and competitions are just as reasonable as their own, and the pleasure which success affords the same.

Our position is, that happiness does not consist in greatness. And this position we make out by showing that even what are supposed to be peculiar advantages of greatness, the pleasures of ambition and superiority, are in reality common to all conditions. But whether the pursuits of ambition be ever wise, whether they contribute more to the happiness or misery of the pursuers, is a different question, and a question concerning which we may be allowed to entertain great doubt. The pleasure of success is exquisite; so also is the anxiety of the pursuit, and the pain of disappointment: and what is the worst part of the account, the pleasure is short-lived. We soon cease to look back upon those whom we have left behind; new contests are engaged in, new prospects unfold themselves: a succession of struggles is kept up, whilst there is a rival left within the compass of our views and profession; and when there is none, the pleasure with the pursuit is at an end.

II. We have seen what happiness does not consist in. We are next to consider in what it does consist.

In the conduct of life, the great matter is, to know beforehand what will please us, and what pleasure will hold out. So far as we know this, our choice will be justified by the event. And this knowledge is more scarce and difficult than at first sight it may seem to be: for sometimes pleasures which are wonderfully alluring and flattering in the prospect, turn out in the possession extremely insipid, or do not hold out as we expected: at other times, pleasures start up which never entered into our calculation, and which we might have missed by not foreseeing; whence we have reason to believe that we actually do miss many pleasures from the same cause. I say to know 'beforehand'; for, after the experiment is tried, it is commonly impracticable to retreat or change; besides, that shifting and changing is apt to generate a habit of restlessness, which is destructive of the happiness of every condition.

By reason of the original diversity of taste, capacity, and constitution, observable in the human species, and the still greater variety which habit and fashion have introduced in these particulars, it is impossible to propose any plan of happiness which will succeed to all, or any method of life which is universally eligible or practicable.

All that can be said is, that there remains a presumption in favour of those conditions of life in which men generally appear most cheerful and contented. For though the apparent happiness of mankind be not always a true measure of their real happiness, it is the best measure we have.

Taking this for my guide, I am inclined to believe that happiness consists,—

First, In the exercise of the social affections.

Those persons commonly possess good spirits who have about them many objects of affection and endearment, as wife, children, kindred, friends. And to the want of these may be imputed the peevishness of monks, and of such as lead a monastic life.

Of the same nature with the indulgence of our domestic affections, and equally refreshing to the spirits, is the pleasure which results from acts of bounty and beneficence, exercised either in giving money, or in imparting to those who want it the assistance of our skill and profession.

Another main article of human happiness is,—

Secondly, The exercise of our faculties, either of body or mind, in the pursuit of some engaging end.

It seems to be true, that no plentitude of present gratifications make the possessor happy for a continuance, unless he has something in reserve, something to hope for and look forward to. This I conclude to be the case, from comparing the alacrity and spirits of men who are engaged in any pursuit which interests them, with the dejection and *ennui* of almost all who are either born to so much that they want nothing more, or who have *used up* their satisfactions too soon, and drained the sources of them.

It is this intolerable vacuity of mind which carries the rich and great to the horse-course and the gaming table; and often engages them in contests and pursuits, of which the success bears no proportion to the solicitude and expense with which it is sought. An election for a disputed borough shall cost the parties

twenty or thirty thousand pounds each—to say nothing of the anxiety, humiliation, and fatigue of the canvass; when a seat in the House of Commons, of exactly the same value, may be had for a tenth part of the money, and with no trouble. I do not mention this to blame the rich and great (perhaps they cannot do better), but in confirmation of what I have advanced.

Hope, which thus appears to be of so much importance to our happiness, is of two kinds: where there is something to be done towards attaining the object of our hope: and where there is nothing to be done. The first alone is of any value; the latter being apt to corrupt into impatience, having no power but to sit still and wait, which soon grows tiresome.

The doctrine delivered under this head may be readily admitted; but how to provide ourselves with a succession of pleasurable engagements is the difficulty. This requires two things: judgment in the choice of *ends* adapted to our opportunities; and a command of imagination, so as to be able, when the judgment has made choice of an end, to transfer a pleasure to the *means*; after which, the end may be forgotten as soon as we will.

Hence, those pleasures are most valuable, not which are most exquisite in the fruition, but which are most productive of engagement and activity in the pursuit.

A man who is in earnest in his endeavours after the happiness of a future state, has in this respect, an advantage over all the world; for he has constantly before his eyes an object of supreme importance, productive of perpetual engagement and activity, and of which the pursuit (which can be said of no

pursuit besides) lasts him to his life's end. Yet even he must have many ends besides the *far end* ; but then they will conduct to that, be subordinate, and in some way or other capable of being referred to that, and derive their satisfaction, or an addition of satisfaction, from that.

Engagement is everything: the more significant, however, our engagements are, the better; such as the planning of laws, institutions, manufactures, charities, improvements, public works; and the endeavouring, by our interest, address, solicitations, and activity, to carry them into effect: or, upon a smaller scale, the procuring of a maintenance and fortune for our families by a course of industry and application to our callings, which forms and gives motion to the common occupations of life; training up a child, prosecuting a scheme for his future establishment, making ourselves masters of a language or a science, improving or managing an estate, labouring after a piece of preferment: and lastly, *any* engagement which is innocent is better than none, as the writing of a book, the building of a house, the laying out of a garden, the digging of a fish-pond—even the raising of a cucumber or a tulip.

Whilst our minds are taken up with the objects or business before us we are commonly happy, whatever the object or business be; when the mind is *absent*, and the thoughts are wandering to something else than that is passing in the place in which we are, we are often miserable.

Thirdly, Happiness depends upon the prudent constitution of the habits.

The art in which the secret of human happiness in a great measure consists, is to *set* the habits in

such a manner that every change may be a change for the better. The habits themselves are much the same; for whatever is made habitual becomes smooth, and easy, and nearly indifferent. The return to an old habit is likewise easy, whatever the habit be. Therefore the advantage is with those habits which allow of an indulgence in the deviation from them. The luxurious receive no greater pleasure from their dainties than the peasant does from his bread and cheese: but the peasant, whenever he goes abroad, finds a feast; whereas the epicure must be well entertained, to escape disgust. Those who spend every day at cards and those who go every day to plough, pass their time much alike; intent upon what they are about, wanting nothing, regretting nothing, they are both for the time in a state of ease: but then whatever suspends the occupation of the card-player distresses him; whereas to the labourer, every interruption is a refreshment; and this appears in the different effects that Sunday produces upon the two, which proves a day of recreation to the one, but a lamentable burden to the other. The man who has learned to live alone, feels his spirits enlivened whenever he enters into company, and takes his leave without regret; another, who has long been accustomed to a crowd, or continual succession of company, experiences in company no elevation of spirits, nor any greater satisfaction than what the man of a retired life finds in his chimney-corner. So far their conditions are equal; but let a change of place, fortune, or situation, separate the companion from his circle, his visitors, his club, common-room, or coffee-house, and the difference and advantage in the choice and constitution of the two habits will

show itself. Solitude comes to the one, clothed with melancholy ; to the other, it brings liberty and quiet. You will see the one fretful and restless, at a loss how to dispose of his time, till the hour come round when he may forget himself in bed ; the other easy and satisfied, taking up his book or his pipe, as soon as he finds himself alone, ready to admit any little amusement that casts up, or to turn his hands and attention to the first business that presents itself ; or content, without either, to sit still and let his train of thought glide indolently through his brain, without much use, perhaps, or pleasure, but without hankering after anything better, and without irritation. A reader who has inured himself to books of science and argumentation, if a novel, a well-written pamphlet, an article of news, a narrative of a curious voyage, or a journal of a traveller, fall in his way, sits down to the repast with relish, enjoys its entertainment while it lasts, and can return, when it is over, to his graver reading without distaste. Another, with whom nothing will go down but works of humour and pleasantry, or whose curiosity must be interested by perpetual novelty, will consume a book-seller's window in half a forenoon : during which time he is rather in search of diversion than diverted ; and as books to his taste are few and short, and rapidly read over, the stock is soon exhausted, when he is left without resource from this principal supply of harmless amusement.

So far as circumstances of fortune conduce to happiness, it is not the income which any man possesses, but the increase of income, that affords the pleasure. Two persons, of whom one begins with a hundred and advances his income to a thousand

pounds a year, and the other sets off with a thousand and dwindles down to a hundred, may in the course of their time, have the receipt and spending of the same sum of money: yet their satisfaction, so far as fortune is concerned in it, will be very different; the series and sumtotal of their incomes being the same, it makes a wide difference at which end they begin.

Fourthly, Happiness consists in health.

By health I understand, as well freedom from bodily distempers, as that tranquillity, firmness, and alacrity of mind, which we call good spirits, and which may properly enough be included in our notion of health, as depending commonly upon the same causes, and yielding to the same management, as our bodily constitution.

Health, in this sense, is the one thing needful. Therefore no pains, expense, self-denial, or restraint to which we subject ourselves for the sake of health, is too much. Whether it require us to relinquish lucrative situations, to abstain from favourite indulgences, to control intemperate passions, or undergo tedious regimens; whatever difficulties it lays us under, a man, who pursues his happiness rationally and resolutely, will be content to submit.

When we are in perfect health and spirits, we feel in ourselves a happiness independent of any particular outward gratification whatever, and of which we can give no account. This is an enjoyment which the Deity has annexed to life; and it probably constitutes, in a great measure, the happiness of infants and brutes, especially of the lower and sedentary orders of animals, as of oysters, periwinkles, and the like; for which I have sometimes been at a loss to find out amusement.

The above account of human happiness will justify the two following conclusions, which, although found in most books of morality, have seldom, I think, been supported by any sufficient reasons:—

First, That happiness is pretty equally distributed amongst the different orders of civil society.

Secondly, That vice has no advantage over virtue, even with respect to this world's happiness.

Charles Lamb (1775-1834)

DREAM-CHILDREN

A REVERIE

Children love to listen to stories about their elders when *they* were children ; to stretch their imagination to the conception of a traditionary great-uncle, or grandame whom they never saw. It was in this spirit that my little ones crept about me the other evening to hear about their great-grandmother Field, who lived in a great house in Norfolk (a hundred times bigger than that in which they and papa lived) which had been the scene—so at least it was generally believed in that part of the country—of the tragic incidents which they had lately become familiar with from the ballad of the Children in the Wood. Certain it is that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the Robin Redbreasts, till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead, with no story upon it. Here Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks, too tender to be called upbraiding. Then I went on to say, how religious and how good their great-grandmother Field was, how beloved and respected by every body, though she was not indeed the mistress of this great house, but had only the charge of it (and yet in some respects she might be said to be the mistress of it too) committed to her by the owner, who preferred

living in a newer and more fashionable mansion which he had purchased somewhere in the adjoining county ; but still she lived in it in a manner as if it had been her own, and kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived, which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried away to the owner's other house, where they were set up, and looked as awkward as if some one were to carry away the old tombs they had seen lately at the Abbey, and stick them up in Lady C.'s tawdry gilt drawing-room. Here John smiled, as much as to say, ' that would be foolish indeed.' And then I told how, when she came to die, her funeral was attended by a concourse of all the poor, and some of the gentry too, of the neighbourhood for many miles round, to show their respect for her memory, because she had been such a good and religious woman ; so good indeed that she knew all the Psalter by heart, ay, and a great part of the Testament besides. Here little Alice spread her hands. Then I told what a tall, upright, graceful person their great-grandmother Field once was ; and how in her youth she was esteemed the best dancer—here Alice's little right foot played an involuntary movement, till, upon my looking grave, it desisted—the best dancer, I was saying, in the county, till a cruel disease, called a cancer, came, and bowed her down with pain ; but it could never bend her good spirits, or make them stoop, but they were still upright, because she was so good and religious. Then I told how she was used to sleep by herself in a lone chamber of the great lone house ; and how she believed—that an apparition of two infants was to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the

great staircase near where she slept, but she said 'those innocents would do her no harm'; and how frightened I used to be, though in those days I had my maid to sleep with me, because I was never half so good or religious as she—and yet I never saw the infants. Here John expanded all his eye-brows and tried to look courageous. Then I told how good she was to all her grand-children, having us to the great-house in the holidays, where I in particular used to spend many hours by myself, in gazing upon the old busts of the Twelve Caesars, that had been Emperors of Rome, till the old marble heads would seem to live again, or I to be turned into marble with them; how I never could be tired with roaming about that huge mansion, with its vast empty rooms, with their worn-out hangings, fluttering tapestry, and carved oaken pannels, with the gilding almost rubbed out—sometimes in the spacious old-fashioned gardens, which I had almost to myself, unless when now and then a solitary gardening man would cross me—and how the nectarines and peaches hung upon the walls, without my ever offering to pluck them, because they were forbidden fruit, unless now and then,—and because I had more pleasure in strolling about among the old melancholy-looking yew trees, or the firs, and picking up the red berries, and the fir apples, which were good for nothing but to look at—or in lying about upon the fresh grass, with all the fine garden smells around me—or basking in the orangery, till I could almost fancy myself ripening too along with the oranges and the limes in that grateful warmth—or in watching the dace that darted to and fro in the fishpond, at the bottom of the garden, with here and there a great sulky pipe hanging midway down the water in silent state, as if it

mocked at their impertinent friskings,—I had more pleasure in these busy-idle diversions than in all the sweet flavours of peaches, nectarines oranges, and such like common baits of children. Here John slyly deposited back upon the plate a bunch of grapes, which, not unobserved by Alice, he had meditated dividing with her, and both seemed willing to relinquish them for the present as irrelevant. Then in somewhat a more heightened tone, I told how, though their great-grand-mother Field loved all her grand-children, yet in an special manner she might be said to love their uncle, John L——, because he was so handsome and spirited a youth, and a king to the rest of us; and, instead of moping about in solitary corners, like some of us, he would mount the most mettlesome horse he could get, when but an imp no bigger than themselves, and make it carry him half over the county in a morning, and join the hunters when there were any out—and yet he loved the old great house and gardens too, but had too much spirit to be always pent up within their boundaries—and how their uncle grew up to man's estate as brave as he was handsome, to the admiration of everybody, but of their great-grand-mother Field most especially; and how he used to carry me upon his back when I was a lame-footed boy—for he was a good bit older than me—many a mile when I could not walk for pain;—and how in after life he became lame-footed too, and I did not always (I fear) make allowances enough for him when he was impatient, and in pain, nor remember sufficiently how considerate he had been to me when I was lame-footed; and how when he died, though he had not been dead an hour, it seemed as if he had died a great while ago, such a distance there is betwixt life and death;

and how I bore his death as I thought pretty well at first, but afterwards it haunted and haunted me; and though I did not cry or take it to heart as some do, and as I think he would have done if I had died, yet I missed him all day long, and knew not till then how much I had loved him. I missed his kindness, and I missed his crossness, and wished him to be alive again, to be quarrelling with him (for we quarrelled sometimes) rather than not have him again, and was as uneasy without him, as he their poor uncle must have been when the doctor took off his limb. Here the children fell a crying, and asked if their little mourning which they had on was not for uncle John, and they looked up, and prayed me not to go on about their uncle, but to tell them some stories about their pretty dead mother. Then I told how for seven long years, in hope sometimes, sometimes in despair, yet persisting ever, I courted the fair Alice W—n; and, as much as children could understand, I explained to them what coyness, and difficulty, and denial meant in maidens—when suddenly, turning to Alice, the soul of the first Alice looked out at her eyes with such a reality of re-presentment, that I became in doubt which of them stood there before me, or whose that bright hair was; and while I stood gazing, both the children gradually grew fainter to my view, receding, and still receding till nothing at last but two mournful features were seen in the uttermost distance, which, without speech, strangely impressed upon me the effects of speech: 'We are not of Alice, nor of thee, nor are we children at all. The children of Alice called Bartrum father. We are nothing; less than nothing, and dreams. We are only what might have been, and must wait upon the tedious shores of Lethe millions of ages before we

have existence, and a name '—and immediately awaking, I found myself quietly seated in my bachelor arm-chair, where I had fallen asleep, with the faithful Bridget unchanged by my side—but John L. (or James Elia) was gone for ever.

William Hazlitt (1776-1834)

ON GOING A JOURNEY

One of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out of doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

"The fields his study, nature was his book."

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticising hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room, and fewer incumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude; nor do I ask for

"——a friend in my retreat,

Whom I may whisper, solitude is sweet."

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do, just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters, where Contemplation

"May plume her feathers and let grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd,"

that I absent myself from the town for a while, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a Tilbury, to exchange good things with and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud, I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sun-burnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like “sunken wrack and sunless treasures,” burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull commonplaces, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns; alliterations, antitheses, argument, and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them. “Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!” I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me “very stuff or the conscience.” Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? I should be but bad company, all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that

you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. "Out upon such half-faced fellowship," say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or solitary. I was pleased with an observation of Mr. Cobbett's, that "he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time." So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. "Let me have a companion of my way," says Sterne, "were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines." It is beautifully said: but in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind, and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show, it is insipid: if you have to explain it, it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature, without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for the syncretical method on a journey, in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomize them afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briars and thorns of controversy. For once, I like to have it all my own way; and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet. I have no

objection to argue a point with any one for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a bean-field crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveller has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is short-sighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the colour of a cloud which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill humour. Now I never quarrel with myself, and take all my own conclusions for granted till I find it necessary to defend them against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you—these may recall a number of objects, and lead to associations too delicate and refined to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company seems extravagance or affectation; and on the other hand, to have to unravel this mystery of our being at every turn, and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered) is a task to which few are competent. We must “give it an understanding, but no tongue.” My old friend C——, however, could do both. He could go on in the most delightful explanatory way over hill and dale, a summer’s day, and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode. “He talked far above singing.” If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words, I might

perhaps wish to have some one with me to admire the swelling theme; or I could be more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of All-Foxden. They had "that fine madness in them which our first poets had"; and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following:—

" Here be woods as green
 As any, air likewise as fresh and sweet
 As when smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet
 Face of the curled streams, with flow'rs as many
 As the young spring gives, and as choice as any ;
 Here be all new delights, cool streams and wells ;
 Arbours o'ergrown with woodbine, caves and dells ;
 Choose where thou wilt, whilst I sit by and sing,
 Or gather rushes to make many a ring
 For thy long fingers ; tell thee tales of love ;
 How the pale Phoebe, hunting in a grove,
 First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
 She took eternal fire that never dies ;
 How she convey'd him softly in a sleep,
 Head of old Latinos, where she stoops each night,
 Gilding the mountain with her brother's light,
 To kiss her sweetest."

Faithful Shepherdess.

Had I words and images at command like these, I would attempt to wake the thoughts that lie slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds: but at the sight of nature my fancy, poor as it is, droops and closes up its leaves, like flowers at sunset. I can make nothing out on the spot—I must have time to collect myself.

In general, a good thing spoils out-of-door prospects: it should be reserved for Table-talk. L—— is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out of doors; because he is the best within

I grant, there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey; and that is, what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation, by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every mile of the road heightens the flavour of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine it is to enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at the approach of night-fall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom; and then, after inquiring for the best entertainment that the place affords, to "take one's ease at one's inn." These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid heart-felt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop: they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea,—

"The cups that cheer, but not inebriate,"—

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper—eggs and a rasher, a rabbit smothered in onions, or an excellent veal-cutlet! Sancho in such a situation once fixed upon cow-heel; and his choice, though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged. Then in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean contemplation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen—*Procul, O procul este profani!* These hours are sacred to silence and to musing, to be treasured up in the memory, and to feed the source

or smiling thoughts hereafter. I would not waste them in idle talk; or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon, I would rather it were by a stranger than by a friend. A stranger takes his hue and character from the time and place; he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn. If he is a Quaker, or from the West Riding of Yorkshire, so much the better. I do not even try to sympathize with him, and he breaks no squares. I associate nothing with my travelling companion but present objects and passing events. In his ignorance of me and my affairs, I in a manner forgot myself. But a friend reminds me of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in ungraciously between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint of your profession and pursuits; or from having some one with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world: but your "unhoused free condition is put into circumspection and confine." The *incognito* of an inn is one of its striking privileges—"lord of one's-self, uncumber'd with a name." Oh! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion—to lose our importunate, tormenting, everlasting personal identity in the elements of nature, and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties—to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweet-breads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening—and no longer seeking for applause and meeting with contempt, to be known by no other title than *the Gentleman in the parlour*! One may take one's choice of all characters in this

romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretensions, and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right-worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture; and from being so to others, begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed commonplaces that we appear in the world: an inn restores us to the level of nature and quits scores with society! I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns—sometimes when I have been left entirely to myself, and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem, as once at Withamcommon, where I found out the proof that likeness is not a case of the association of ideas—at other times, when there have been pictures in the room, as at St. Neot's (I think it was), where I first met with Gribelin's engravings of the Cartoons, into which I entered at once, and at a little inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure of a girl who had ferried me over the Severn, standing up in a boat between me and the twilight—at other times I might mention luxuriating in books, with a peculiar interest in this way, as I remember sitting up half the night to read *Paul and Virginia*, which I picked up at an inn in Bridgewater, after being drenched in the rain all day; and at the same place I got through two volumes of Madame D'Arblay's *Camilla*. It was on the tenth of April, 1798, that I sat down to a volume of the *New Eloise*, at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken. The letter I chose was that in which St. Preux describes his feelings as he first caught a

glimpse from the heights of the Jura of the Pays de Vaud, which I had brought with me as a *bon bouche* to crown the evening with. It was my birthday, and I had for the first time come from a place in the neighbourhood to visit this delightful spot. The road to Llangollen turns off between Chirk and Wrexham; and on passing a certain point, you come all at once upon the valley, which opens like an amphitheatre, broad, barren hills rising in majestic state on either side, with "green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks" below, and the river Dee babbling over its stony bed in the midst of them. The valley at this time "glittered green with sunny showers," and a budding ash-tree dipped its tender branches in the chiding stream. How proud, how glad I was to walk along the high road that overlooks the delicious prospect, repeating the lines which I have just quoted from Mr. Coleridge's poems! But besides the prospect which opened beneath my feet, another also opened to my inward sight, a heavenly vision, on which were written, in letters large as Hope could make them, these four words, LIBERTY, GENIUS, LOVE, VIRTUE; which have since faded into the light of common day, or mock my idle gaze.

"The beautiful is vanished, and returns not."

Still I would return some time or other to this enchanted spot; but I would return to it alone. What other self could I find to share that influx of thoughts, of regret, and delight, the fragments of which I could hardly conjure up to myself, so much have they been broken and defaced. I could stand on some tall rock, and overlook the precipice of years that separates me from what I then was. I was at that

time going shortly to visit the poet whom I have above named. Where is he now? Not only I myself have changed; the world, which was then new to me, has become old and incorrigible. Yet will I turn to thee in thought, O sylvan Dee, in joy, in youth and gladness as thou then wert; and thou shalt always be to me the river of Paradise, where I will drink of the waters of life freely!

There is hardly anything that shows the short-sightedness or capriciousness of the imagination more than travelling does. With change of placé we change our ideas; nay, our opinions and feelings. We can by an effort indeed transport ourselves to old and long-forgotten scenes, and then the picture of the mind revives again; but we forget those that we have just left. It seems that we can think of but one place at a time. The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent, and if we paint one set of objects upon it, they immediately efface every other. We cannot enlarge our conceptions, we only shift our point of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye, we take our fill of it, and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on, and think no more of it: the horizon that shuts it from our sight, also blots it from our memory like a dream. In travelling through a wild barren country, I can form no idea of a woody and cultivated one. It appears to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see of it. In the country we forget the town, and in town we despise the country. "Beyond Hyde Park," says Sir Fopling Flutter; "all is a desert." All that part of the map that we do not see before us is a blank. The world in our conceit of it is not much bigger than a

nutshell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, county joined to county, kingdom to kingdom, lands to seas, making an image voluminous and vast;—the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For instance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population known by the name of China to us? An inch of paste-board on a wooden globe, of no more account than a China orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. We measure the universe by ourselves, and even comprehend the texture of our own being only piecemeal. In this way, however, we remember an infinity of things and places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes, but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another, but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollections, we cannot as it were unfold the whole web of our existence; we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived and with which we have intimate associations, every one must have found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot, from the mere anticipation of the actual impression: we remember circumstances, feelings, persons, faces, names, that we had not thought of for years; but for the time all the rest of the world is forgotten!—To return to the question I have quitted above.

I have no objection to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures, in company with a friend or party, but

rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters, and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where shall we go to: in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what shall we meet with by the way. "The mind is its own place"; nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honours indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party to Oxford with no mean *éclat*—shewed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,—

" With glistening spires and pinnacles adorn'd "—

descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges—was at home in the Bodleian; and, at Blenheim quite superseded the powdered Cicerone that attended us, and that pointed in vain with his wand to commonplace beauties in matchless pictures. As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home increases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends

and countrymen: there must be allowed to be something in the view of Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech; and I own that the Pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, one seems a species by one's self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support.—Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears; nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbour, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France," erect and satisfied; for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones: I was at no loss for language,—for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory, freedom, all are fled, nothing remains but the Bourbons and the French people!—There is undoubtedly a sensation in travelling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else: but it is more pleasing at the time than lasting. It is too remote from our habitual associations to be a common topic of discourse or reference, and, like a dream or another state of existence, does not piece into our daily modes of life. It is an animated but a momentary hallucination. It demands an effort to exchange our actual for our ideal identity, and to feel the pulse of our old transports revive very

keenly, we must "jump" all our present comforts and connections. Our romantic and itinerant character is not to be domesticated. Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact, the time we have spent there is both delightful and in one sense instructive; but it appears to be cut out of our substantial, downright existence, and never to join kindly on to it. We are not the same, but another, and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We are lost to ourselves, as well as our friends. So the poet somewhat quaintly sings,—

"Out of my country and myself I go."

Those who wish to forget painful thoughts, do well to absent themselves for a while from the ties and objects that recall them: but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life in travelling abroad, if I could anywhere borrow another life to spend afterwards at home!—

IMMORTALITY

No young man believes he shall ever die. It was a saying of my brother's, and a fine one. There is a feeling of Eternity in youth which makes amends for everything. To be young is to be as one of the Immortals. One half of time, indeed, is spent—the other half remains in store for us with all its countless treasures, for there is no line drawn, and we see no limit to our hopes and wishes. We make the coming age our own—

"The vast, the unbounded prospect lies before us."

Death, old age, are words without a meaning, a dream, a fiction, with which we have nothing to do. Others may have undergone, or may still undergo them—we “bear a charmed life,” which laughs to scorn all such idle fancies. As, in setting out on a delightful journey, we strain our eager sight forward,—

“Bidding the lovely scenes at distance hail,”—

and see no end to prospect after prospect, new objects presenting themselves as we advance, so in the outset of life we see no end to our desires nor to the opportunities of gratifying them. We have as yet found no obstacle, no disposition to flag, and it seems that we can go on so for ever. We look round in a new world, full of life and motion, and ceaseless progress, and feel in ourselves all the vigour and spirit to keep pace with it, and do not foresee from any present signs how we shall be left behind in the race, decline into old age, and drop into the grave. It is the simplicity, and, as it were, abstractedness of our feelings in youth that (so to speak) identifies us with nature and (our experience being weak and our passions strong) makes us fancy ourselves immortal like it. Our short-lived connection with being, we fondly flatter ourselves, is an indissoluble and lasting union. As infants smile and sleep, we are rocked in the cradle of our desires, and hushed into fancied security by the roar of the universe around us—we quaff the cup of life with eager thirst without draining it, and joy and hope seem ever mantling to the brim—objects press around us, filling the mind with their magnitude and with the throng of desires that wait upon them, so that there is no room for the

thoughts of death. We are too much dazzled by the gorgeousness and novelty of the bright waking dream about us to discern the dim shadow lingering for us in the distance. Nor would the hold that life has taken of us permit us to detach our thoughts that way, even if we could. We are too much absorbed in present objects and pursuits. While the spirit of youth remains unimpaired, ere "the wine of life is drunk," we are like people intoxicated or in a fever, who are hurried away by the violence of their own sensations: it is only as present objects begin to pall upon the sense, as we have been disappointed in our favourite pursuits, cut off from our closest ties, that we by degrees become weaned from the world, that passion loosens its hold upon futurity, and that we begin to contemplate as in a glass darkly the possibility of parting with it for good. Till then, the example of others has no effect upon us. Casualties we avoid; the slow approaches of age we play at *hide and seek* with. Like the foolish fat scullion in Sterne, who hears that Master Bobby is dead, our only reflection is, "So am not I!" The idea of death, instead of staggering our confidence, only seems to strengthen and enhance our sense of the possession and enjoyment of life. Others may fall around us like leaves, or be mowed down by the scythe of Time like grass: these are but metaphors to the unreflecting, buoyant ears and overweening presumption of youth. It is not till we see the flowers of Love, Hope, and Joy withering around us, that we give up the flattering delusions that before led us on, and that the emptiness and dreariness of the prospect before us reconciles us hypothetically to the silence of the grave.

Life is indeed a strange gift, and its privileges are most mysterious. No wonder when it is first granted to us, that our gratitude, our admiration, and our delight should prevent us from reflecting on our own nothingness, or from thinking it will ever be recalled. Our first and strongest impressions are borrowed from the mighty scene that is open to us, and we unconsciously transfer its durability as well as its splendour to ourselves. So newly found, we cannot think of parting with it yet, or at least put off that consideration *sine die*. Like a rustic at a fair, we are full of amazement and rapture, and have no thought of going home, or that it will soon be night. We know our existence only by ourselves, and confound our knowledge with the objects of it. We and Nature are therefore one. Otherwise the illusion, the "feast of reason and the flow of soul," to which we are invited, is a mockery and a cruel insult. We do not go from a play till the last act is ended, and the lights are about to be extinguished. But the fairy face of Nature still shines on: shall we be called away before the curtain falls, or ere we have scarce had a glimpse of what is going on? Like children, our stepmother Nature holds us up to see the raree-show of the universe, and then, as if we were a burden to her to support, lets us fall down again. Yet what brave sublunary things does not this pageant present, like a ball or *fête* of the universe !

To see the golden sun, the azure sky, the out-stretched ocean ; to walk upon the green earth, and be lord of a thousand creatures ; to look down yawning precipices or over distant sunny vales ; to see the world spread out under one's feet on a map ; to bring the stars near ; to view the smallest insects through

a microscope ; to read history, and consider the revolutions of empire and the successions of generations ; to hear of the glory of Tyre, of Sidon, of Babylon, and of Susa, and to say all these were before me and are now nothing ; to say I exist in such a point of time, and in such a point of space ; to be a spectator and a part of its ever-moving scene ; to witness the change of season, of spring and autumn, of winter and summer ; to feel hot and cold, pleasure and pain, beauty and deformity, right and wrong ; to be sensible to the accidents of Nature ; to consider the mighty world of eye and ear ; to listen to the stock-dove's notes amid the forest deep ; to journey over moor and mountain ; to hear the midnight sainted choir ; to visit lighted halls, or the cathedral's gloom, or sit in crowded theatres and see life itself mocked ; to study the works of art and refine the sense of beauty to agony ; to worship fame, and to dream of immortality ; to look upon the Vatican, and to read Shakespeare ; to gather up the wisdom of the ancients, and to pry into the future ; to listen to the trump of war, the shout of victory ; to question history as to the movements of the human hearts ; to seek for truth ; to plead the cause of humanity ; to overlook the world as if time and nature poured their treasures at our feet—to be and to do all this, and then in a moment to be nothing—to have it all snatched from us as by a juggler's trick, or a phantasmagoria ! There is something in this transition from all to nothing that shocks us and damps the enthusiasm of youth new flushed with hope and pleasure, and we cast the comfortless thought as far from us as we can. In the first enjoyment of the estate of life we discard the fear of debts

and duns, and never think of the final payment of our great debt to Nature. Art we know is long ; life, we flatter ourselves, should be so too. We see no end of the difficulties and delays we have to encounter ; perfection is slow of attainment, and we must have time to accomplish it in. The fame of the great names we look up to is immortal ; and shall not we who contemplate it imbibe a portion of ethereal fire, the *divinæ particula auræ*, which nothing can extinguish ? A wrinkle in Rembrandt or in Nature takes whole days to resolve itself into its component parts, its softenings and its sharpnesses ; we refine upon our perfections, and unfold the intricacies of nature. What a prospect for the future ! What a task have we not begun ! And shall we be arrested in the middle of it ? We do not count our time thus employed lost, or our pains thrown away ; we do not flag or grow tired, but gain new vigour at our endless task. Shall Time, then, grudge us to finish what we have begun, and have formed a compact with Nature to do ? Why not fill up the blank that is left us in this manner ? I have looked for hours at a Rembrandt without being conscious of the flight of time, but with ever new wonder and delight, have thought that not only my own but another existence I could pass in the same manner. This rarefied, refined existence seemed to have no end, nor stint, nor principle of decay in it. The print would remain long after I who looked on it had become the prey of worms. The thing seems in itself out of all reason ; health, strength, appetite are opposed to the idea of death, and we are not ready to credit it till we have found our illusions vanished, and our hopes grown cold. Objects in youth, from novelty, etc., are tamped

upon the brain with such force and integrity that one thinks nothing can remove or obliterate them. They are riveted there, and appear to us as an element of our nature. It must be a mere violence that destroys them, not a natural decay. In the very strength of this persuasion we seem to enjoy an age by anticipation. We melt down years into a single moment of intense sympathy, and by anticipating the fruits defy the ravages of time. If, then, a single moment of our lives is worth years, shall we set any limits to its total value and extent ? Again, does it not happen that so secure do we think ourselves of an indefinite period of existence, that at times when left to ourselves, and impatient of novelty, we feel annoyed at what seems to us the slow and creeping progress of time, and argue that if it always moves at this tedious snail's pace it will never come to an end ? How ready are we to sacrifice any space of time that separates us from a favourite object, little thinking that before long we shall find it too fast.

For my own part, I started in life with the French Revolution, and I have lived, alas ! to see the end of it. But I did not foresee this result. My sun arose with the first dawn of liberty, and I did not think how soon both must set. The new impulse to ardour given to men's minds imparted a congenial warmth and glow to mine ; we were strong to run a race together, and I little dreamed that long before mine was set, the sun of liberty would turn to blood, or set once more in the night of despotism. Since then, I confess, I have no longer felt myself young, for with that my hopes fell.

I have since turned my thoughts to gathering up some of the fragments of my early recollections, and putting them into a form to which I might occasionally revert. The future was barred to my progress, and I turned for consolation and encouragement to the past. It is thus that, while we find our personal and substantial identity vanishing from us, we strive to gain a reflected and vicarious one in our thoughts: we do not like to perish wholly, and wish to bequeath our names, at least, to posterity. As long as we can make our cherished thoughts and nearest interests live in the minds of others, we do not appear to have retired altogether from the stage. We still occupy the breasts of others, and exert an influence and power over them, and it is only our bodies that are reduced to dust and powder. Our favourite speculations still find encouragement, and we make as great a figure in the eye of the world, or perhaps a greater, than in our lifetime. The demands of our self-love are thus satisfied, and these are the most imperious and unremitting. Besides, if by our intellectual superiority we survive ourselves in this world, by our virtues and faith we may attain an interest in another, and a higher state of being, and may thus be recipients at the same time of men and angels.

“ E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.”

As we grow old, our sense of the value of time becomes vivid. Nothing else, indeed, seems of any consequence. We can never cease wondering that that which has ever been should cease to be. We find many things remain the same: why then

should there be change in us? This adds a convulsive grasp of whatever is, a sense of a fallacious hollowness in all we see. Instead of the full, pulpy feeling of youth tasting existence and every object in it, all is flat and vapid,—a whited sepulchre, fair without but full of ravening and all uncleanness within. The world is a witch that puts us off with false shows and appearances. The simplicity of youth, the confiding expectation, the boundless raptures, are gone: we only think of getting out of it as well as we can, and without any great mischance or annoyance. The flush of illusion, even the complacent retrospect of past joys and hopes, is over: if we can slip out of life without indignity, can escape with little bodily infirmity, and frame our minds to the calm and respectable composure of *still-life* before we return to physical nothingness, it is as much as we can expect. We do not die wholly at our deaths: we have mouldered away gradually long before. Faculty after faculty, interest after interest, attachment after attachment disappear: we are torn from ourselves while living, year after year sees us no longer the same, and death only consigns the last fragment of what we were to the grave. That we should wear out by slow stages, and dwindle at last into nothing, is not wonderful, when even in our prime our strongest impressions leave little trace but for the moment, and we are the creatures of petty circumstance. How little effect is made on us in our best days by the books we have read, the scenes we have witnessed, the sensations we have gone through! Think only of the feelings we experience in reading a fine romance (one of Sir Walter's, for instance); what beauty, what sublimity, what interest, what heart-rending emotions! You

would suppose the feelings you then experienced would last for ever, or subdue the mind to their own harmony and tone: while we are reading it seems as if nothing could ever put us out of our way, or trouble us:—the first splash of mud that we get on entering the street, the first twopence we are cheated out of, the feeling vanishes clean out of our minds, and we become the prey of petty and annoying circumstance. The mind soars to the lofty: it is at home in the grovelling, the disagreeable, and the little. And yet we wonder that age should be so feeble and querulous,—that the freshness of youth should fade away. Both worlds would hardly satisfy the extravagance of our desires and of our presumption.

D. Webster (1782-1852)

FIRST BUNKER HILL ORATION

This uncounted multitude before me, and around me, proves the feeling which the occasion has excited. These thousands of human faces, glowing with sympathy and joy, and, from the impulses of a common gratitude, turned reverently to heaven, in this spacious temple of the firmament, proclaim that the day, the place, and the purpose of our assembling have made a deep impression on our hearts.

If, indeed, there be anything in local association fit to affect the mind of man, we need not strive to repress the emotions which agitate us here. We are among the sepulchres of our fathers. We are on ground, distinguished by their valor, their constancy, and the shedding of their blood. We are here, not to fix an uncertain date in our annals, nor to draw into notice an obscure and unknown spot. If our humble purpose had never been conceived, if we ourselves had never been born, the 17th of June, 1775, would have been a day on which all subsequent history would have poured its light, and the eminence where we stand, a point of attraction to the eyes of successive generations. But we are Americans. We live in what may be called the early age of this great continent; and we know that our posterity, through all time, are here to suffer and enjoy the allotments of humanity. We see before us a probable train of great events; we know that our own

fortunes have been happily cast; and it is natural, therefore, that we should be moved by the contemplation of occurrences which have guided our destiny before many of us were born, and settled the condition in which we should pass that portion of our existence, which God allows to men on earth.

We do not read even of the discovery of this continent, without feeling something of a personal interest in the event; without being reminded how much it has affected our own fortunes, and our own existence. It is more impossible for us, therefore, than for others, to contemplate with unaffected minds that interesting, I may say, that most touching and pathetic scene, when the great Discoverer of America stood on the deck of his shattered bark, the shades of night falling on the sea, yet no man sleeping; tossed on the billows of an unknown ocean, yet the stronger billows of alternate hope and despair tossing his own troubled thought; extending forward his harassed frame, straining westward his anxious and eager eyes, till Heaven at last granted him a moment of rapture and ecstasy, in blessing his vision with the sight of the unknown world.

Nearer to our times, more closely connected with our fates, and therefore still more interesting to our feelings and affections, is the settlement of our own country by colonists from England. We cherish every memorial of these worthy ancestors; we celebrate their patience and fortitude; we admire their daring enterprise; we teach our children to venerate their piety; and we are justly proud of being descended from men, who have set the world an example of founding civil institutions on the great and united principles of human freedom and human

knowledge. To us, their children, the story of their labors and sufferings can never be without its interest. We shall not stand unmoved on the shore of Plymouth, while the sea continues to wash it; nor will our brethren in another early and ancient colony, forget the place of its first establishment, till their river shall cease to flow by it. No vigor of youth, no maturity of manhood, will lead the nation to forget the spots where its infancy was cradled and defended.

But the great event, in the history of the continent, which we are now met here to commemorate; that prodigy of modern times, at once the wonder and the blessing of the world, is the American Revolution. In a day of extraordinary prosperity and happiness, of high national honor, distinction, and power, we are brought together, in this place, by our love of country, by our admiration of exalted character, by our gratitude for signal services and patriotic devotion.

The society, whose organ I am, was formed for the purpose of rearing some honorable and durable monument to the memory of the early friends of American Independence. They have thought, that for this object no time could be more propitious, than the present prosperous and peaceful period; that no place could claim preference over this memorable spot; and that no day could be more auspicious to the undertaking, than the anniversary of the battle which was here fought. The foundation of that monument we have now laid. With solemnities suited to the occasion, with prayers to Almighty God for his blessing, and in the midst of this cloud of witnesses, we have begun the work. We trust it will

be prosecuted; and that springing from a broad foundation, rising high in massive solidity and unadorned grandeur, it may remain, as long as Heaven permits the works of man to last, a fit emblem, both of the events in memory of which it is raised, and of the gratitude of those who have reared it.

We know, indeed, that the record of illustrious actions is most safely deposited in the universal remembrance of mankind. We know, that if we could cause this structure to ascend, not only till it reached the skies, but till it pierced them, its broad surfaces could still contain but part of that, which, in an age of knowledge, hath already been spread over the earth, and which history charges itself with making known to all future times. We know, that no inscription on entablatures less broad than the earth itself, can carry information of the events we commemorate, where it has not already gone; and that no structure, which shall not outlive the duration of letters and knowledge among men, can prolong the memorial. But our object is, by this edifice to show our own deep sense of the value and importance of the achievements of our ancestors; and, by presenting this work of gratitude to the eye, to keep alive similar sentiments, and to foster a constant regard for the principles of the Revolution. Human beings are composed not of reason only, but of imagination also, and sentiment; and that is neither wasted nor misapplied which is appropriated to the purpose of giving right direction to sentiments, and opening proper springs of feeling in the heart. Let it not be supposed that our object is to perpetuate national hostility, or even to cherish a mere military spirit. It is higher, purer, nobler. We consecrate

our work to the spirit of national independence, and we wish that the light of peace may rest upon it for ever. We rear a memorial of our conviction of that unmeasured benefit, which has been conferred on our own land, and of the happy influences, which have been produced, by the same events, on the general interests of mankind. We come, as Americans, to mark a spot, which must for ever be dear to us and our posterity. We wish, that whosoever, in all coming time, shall turn his eye hither, may behold that the place is not undistinguished, where the first great battle of the Revolution was fought. We wish, that this structure may proclaim the magnitude and importance of that event, to every class and every age. We wish, that infancy may learn the purpose of its erection from maternal lips, and that weary and withered age may behold it, and be solaced by the recollections which it suggests. We wish, that labor may look up here, and be proud, in the midst of its toil. We wish, that, in those days of disaster, which, as they come on all nations, must be expected to come on us also, desponding patriotism may turn its eyes hitherward, and be assured that the foundations of our national power still stand strong. We wish, that this column, rising towards heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God, may contribute also to produce, in all minds, a pious feeling of dependence and gratitude. We wish, finally, that the last object on the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden him who revisits it, may be something which shall remind him of the liberty and the glory of his country. Let it rise, till it meet the sun in his

coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit.

We live in a most extraordinary age. Events so various and so important, that they might crowd and distinguish centuries, are, in our times, compressed within the compass of a single life. When has it happened that history has had so much to record, in the same term of years, as since the 17th of June 1775? Our own Revolution, which, under other circumstances, might itself have been expected to occasion a war of half a century, has been achieved; twenty-four sovereign and independent states erected; and a general government established over them, so safe, so wise, so free, so practical, that we might well wonder its establishment should have been accomplished so soon, were it not far the greater wonder that it should have been established at all. Two or three millions of people have been augmented to twelve; and the great forests of the West prostrated beneath the arm of successful industry; and the dwellers on the banks of the Ohio and the Mississippi, become the fellow citizens and neighbours of those who cultivate the hills of New England. We have a commerce, that leaves no sea unexplored; navies, which take no law from superior force; revenues, adequate to all the exigencies of government, almost without taxation; and peace with all nations, founded on equal rights and mutual respect.

Europe, within the same period, has been agitated by a mighty revolution, which, while it has been felt in the individual condition and happiness of almost every man, has shaken to the centre her political fabric, and dashed against one another thrones, which had stood tranquil for ages. On

this, our continent, our own example has been followed; and colonies have sprung up to be nations. Unaccustomed sounds of liberty and free government have reached us from beyond the track of the sun; and at this moment the dominion of European power, in this continent, from the place where we stand to the south pole, is annihilated for ever.

In the mean time, both in Europe and America, such has been the general progress of knowledge; such the improvements in legislation, in commerce, in the arts, in letters, and above all in liberal ideas, and the general spirit of the age, that the whole world seems changed.

Yet, notwithstanding that this is but a faint abstract of the things which have happened since the day of the battle of Bunker Hill, we are but fifty years removed from it; and we now stand here, to enjoy all the blessings of our own condition, and to look abroad on the brightened prospects of the world, while we hold still among us some of those, who were active agents in the scenes of 1775, and who are now here, from every quarter of New England, to visit, once more, and under circumstances so affecting, I had almost said so overwhelming, this renowned theatre of their courage and patriotism.

Venerable Men! you have come down to us, from a former generation. Heaven has bounteously lengthened out your lives, that you might behold this joyous day. You are now, where you stood, fifty years ago, this very hour, with your brothers, and your neighbours, shoulder to shoulder, in the strife for your country. Behold, how altered! The same heavens are indeed over your heads; the same ocean rolls at your feet; but all else, how changed! You

hear now no roar of hostile cannon, you see no mixed volumes or smoke and flame rising from burning Charlestown. The ground strewed with the dead and the dying; the impetuous charge; the steady and successful repulse; the loud call to repeated assault; the summoning of all that is manly to repeated resistance; a thousand bosoms freely and fearlessly bared in an instant to whatever of terror there may be in war and death;—all these you have witnessed, but you witness them no more. All is peace. The heights of yonder metropolis, its towers and roofs, which you then saw filled with wives and children and countrymen in distress and terror, and looking with unutterable emotions for the issue of the combat, have presented you to-day with the sight of its whole happy population, come out to welcome and greet you with an universal jubilee. Yonder proud ships, by a felicity of position appropriately lying at the foot of this mount, and seeming fondly to cling around it, are not means of annoyance to you, but your country's own means of distinction and defence. All is peace; and God has granted you this sight of your country's happiness, ere you slumber in the grave forever. He has allowed you to behold and to partake the reward of your patriotic toils; and he has allowed us, your sons and countrymen, to meet you here, and in the name of the present generation, in the name of your country, in the name of liberty, to thank you!

But, alas! you are not all here! Time and the sword have thinned your ranks. Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Brooks, Read, Pomeroy, Bridge! our eyes seek for you in vain amidst this broken band. You are gathered to your fathers, and live only to your

country in her grateful remembrance, and your own bright example. But let us not too much grieve, that you have met the common fate of men. You lived, at least, long enough to know that your work had been nobly and successfully accomplished. You lived to see your country's independence established, and to sheathe your swords from war. On the light of Liberty you saw arise the light of Peace, like

. ' another morn,
Risen on mid-noon ; '—

and the sky, on which you closed your eyes, was cloudless.

But—ah!—Him! the first great Martyr in this great cause! Him! the premature victim of his own self-devoting heart! Him! the head of our civil councils, and the destined leader of our military bands; whom nothing brought hither, but the unquenchable fire of his own spirit; Him! cut off by Providence, in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom; falling, ere he saw the star of his country rise; pouring out his generous blood, like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage! how shall I struggle with the emotions, that stifle the utterance of thy name!—Our poor work may perish; but thine shall endure! This monument may moulder away; the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea; but thy memory shall not fail! Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found, that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit!

But the scene amidst which we stand does not permit us to confine our thoughts or our sympathies

to those fearless spirits, who hazarded or lost their lives on this consecrated spot. We have the happiness to rejoice here in the presence of a most worthy representation of the survivors of the whole Revolutionary Army.

Veterans! you are the remnant of many a well fought field. You bring with you marks of honor from Trenton and Monmouth, from Yorktown, Camden, Bennington, and Saratoga. Veterans of half a century! when in your youthful days, you put every thing at hazard in your country's cause, good as that cause was, and sanguine as youth is, still your fondest hopes did not stretch onward to an hour like this! At a period to which you could not reasonably have expected to arrive; at a moment of national prosperity, such as you could never have foreseen, you are now met, here, to enjoy the fellowship of old soldiers and to receive the overflowings of an universal gratitude.

But your agitated countenances and your heaving breasts inform me that even this is not an unmixed joy. I perceive that a tumult of contending feelings rushes upon you. The images of the dead, as well as the persons of the living, throng to your embraces. The scene overwhelms you, and I turn from it. May the Father of all mercies smile upon your declining years, and bless them! And when you shall here have exchanged your embraces; when you shall once more have pressed the hands which have been so often extended to give succour in adversity, or grasped in the exultation of victory; then look abroad into this lovely land, which your young valor defended, and mark the happiness with which it is filled; yea, look abroad into the whole

earth, and see what a name you have contributed to give to your country, and what a praise you have added to freedom, and then rejoice in the sympathy and gratitude, which beam upon your last days from the improved condition of mankind.

The occasion does not require of me any particular account of the battle of the 17th of June, nor any detailed narrative of the events which immediately preceded it. These are familiarly known to all. In the progress of the great and interesting controversy, Massachusetts and the town of Boston had become early and marked objects of the displeasure of the British Parliament. This had been manifested, in the Act for altering the Government of the Province, and in that for shutting up the Port of Boston. Nothing sheds more honor on our early history, and nothing better shows how little the feelings and sentiments of the colonies were known or regarded in England, than the impression which these measures everywhere produced in America. It had been anticipated, that while the other colonies would be terrified by the severity of the punishment inflicted on Massachusetts, the other seaports would be governed by a mere spirit of gain; and that, as Boston was now cut off from all commerce, the unexpected advantage, which this blow on her was calculated to confer on other towns, would be greedily enjoyed. How miserably such reasoners deceived themselves! How little they knew of the depth, and the strength, and the intenseness of that feeling of resistance to illegal acts of power, which possessed the whole American people! Everywhere the unworthy boon was rejected with scorn. The fortunate occasion was seized, everywhere, to show to the whole

world, that the colonies were swayed by no local interest, no partial interest, no selfish interest. The temptation to profit by the punishment of Boston was strongest to our neighbours of Salem. Yet Salem was precisely the place, where this miserable proffer was spurned, in a tone of the most lofty self-respect, and the most indignant patriotism. 'We are deeply affected,' said its inhabitants, 'with the sense of our public calamities; but the miseries that are now rapidly hastening on our brethren in the capital of the Province, greatly excite our commiseration. By shutting up the Port of Boston, some imagine that the course of trade might be turned hither and to our benefit; but we must be dead to every idea of justice, lost to all feelings of humanity, could we indulge a thought to seize on wealth, and raise our fortunes on the ruin of our suffering neighbours.' These noble sentiments were not confined to our immediate vicinity. In that day of general affection and brotherhood, the blow given to Boston smote on every patriotic heart, from one end of the country to the other. Virginia and the Carolinas, as well as Connecticut and New Hampshire, felt and proclaimed the cause to be their own. The Continental Congress, then holding its first session in Philadelphia, expressed its sympathy for the suffering inhabitants of Boston, and addresses were received from all quarters, assuring them that the cause was a common one and should be met by common efforts and common sacrifices. The Congress of Massachusetts responded to these assurances; and in an address to the Congress at Philadelphia, bearing the official signature, perhaps among the last, of the immortal Warren, notwithstanding the severity of its suffering

and the magnitude of the dangers which threatened it, it was declared, that this colony 'is ready, at all times, to spend and to be spent in the cause of America.'

But the hour drew nigh, which was to put professions to the proof, and to determine whether the authors of these mutual pledges were ready to seal them in blood. The tidings of Lexington and Concord had no sooner spread, than it was universally felt, that the time was at last come for action. A spirit pervaded all ranks, not transient, not boisterous, but deep, solemn, determined,

' totamque infusa per artus

Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.'

War, on their own soil and at their own doors, was, indeed, a strange work to the yeomanry of New England; but their consciences were convinced of its necessity, their country called them to it, and they did not withhold themselves from the perilous trial. The ordinary occupations of life were abandoned; the plough was staid in the unfinished furrow; wives gave up their husbands, and mothers gave up their sons, to the battles of a civil war. Death might come, in honor, on the field; it might come, in disgrace, on the scaffold. For either and for both they were prepared. The sentiment of Quincy was full in their hearts. 'Blandishments,' said that distinguished son of genius and patriotism, 'will not fascinate us, nor will threats of a halter intimidate; for, under God, we are determined, that wheresoever, whensoever, or howsoever we shall be called to make our exit, we will die free men.'

The 17th of June saw the four New England colonies standing here, side by side, to triumph or to fall together; and there was with them from that moment to the end of the war, what I hope will remain with them forever, one cause, one country, one heart.

The battle of Bunker Hill was attended with the most important effects beyond its immediate result as a military engagement. It created at once a state of open, public war. There could now be no longer a question of proceeding against individuals, as guilty of treason or rebellion. That fearful crisis was past. The appeal now lay to the sword, and the only question was, whether the spirit and the resources of the people would hold out, till the object should be accomplished. Nor were its general consequences confined to our own country. The previous proceedings of the colonies, their appeals, resolutions, and addresses, had made their cause known to Europe. Without boasting, we may say, that in no age or country, has the public cause been maintained with more force of argument, more power of illustration, or more of that persuasion which excited feeling and elevated principle can alone bestow, than the revolutionary state papers exhibit. These papers will forever deserve to be studied, not only for the spirit which they breathe, but for the ability with which they were written.

To this able vindication of their cause, the colonies had now added a practical and severe proof of their own true devotion to it, and evidence also of the power which they could bring to its support. All now saw, that if America fell, she would not fall without a struggle. Men felt sympathy and regard.

as well as surprise, when they beheld these infant states, remote, unknown, unaided, encounter the power of England, and in the first considerable battle, leave more of their enemies dead on the field, in proportion to the number of combatants, than they had recently known in the wars of Europe:

Information of these events, circulating through Europe, at length reached the ears of one who now hears me. He has not forgotten the emotion, which the fame of Bunker Hill, and the name of Warren, excited in his youthful breast.

Sir, we are assembled to commemorate the establishment of great public principles of liberty, and to do honor to the distinguished dead. The occasion is too severe for eulogy to the living. But, sir, your interesting relation to this country, the peculiar circumstances which surround you and surround us, call on me to express the happiness which we derive from your presence and aid in this solemn commemoration.

Fortunate, fortunate man! with what measure of devotion will you not thank God, for the circumstances of your extraordinary life! You are connected with both hemispheres and with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain, that the electric spark of Liberty should be conducted, through you, from the new world to the old; and we, who are now here to perform this duty of patriotism, have all of us long ago received it in charge from our fathers to cherish your name and your virtues. You will account it an instance of your good fortune, sir, that you crossed the seas to visit us at a time which enables you to be present at this solemnity. You now behold the field, the renown of which reached you in the heart of

France, and caused a thrill in your ardent bosom. You see the lines of the little redoubt thrown up by the incredible diligence of Prescott; defended, to the last extremity, by his lion-hearted valor; and within which the corner stone of our monument has now taken its position. You see where Warren fell, and where Parker, Gardner, McCleary, Moore, and other early patriots fell with him. Those who survived that day, and whose lives have been prolonged to the present hour, are now around you. Some of them you have known in the trying scenes of the war. Behold! they now stretch forth their feeble arms to embrace you. Behold! they raise their trembling voices to invoke the blessing of God on you, and yours, forever.

Sir, you have assisted us in laying the foundation of this edifice. You have heard us rehearse, with our feeble commendation, the names of departed patriots. Sir, monuments and eulogy belong to the dead. We give them, this day, to Warren and his associates. On other occasions they have been given to your more immediate companions in arms, to Washington, to Greene, to Gates, Sullivan, and Lincoln. Sir, we have become reluctant to grant these, our highest and last honors, further. We would gladly hold them yet back from the little remnant of that immortal band. *Servus in cælum redeas.* Illustrious as are your merits, yet far, oh, very far distant be the day, when any inscription shall bear your name, or any tongue pronounce its eulogy!

The leading reflection, to which this occasion seems to invite us, respects the great changes which have happened in the fifty years, since the battle of Bunker Hill was fought. And it peculiarly marks

the character of the present age, that, in looking at these changes, and in estimating their effect on our condition, we are obliged to consider, not what has been done in our own country only, but in others also. In these interesting times, while nations are making separate and individual advances in improvement, they make, too, a common progress; like vessels on a common tide, propelled by the gales at different rates, according to their several structure and management, but all moved forward by one mighty current beneath, strong enough to bear onward whatever does not sink beneath it.

A chief distinction of the present day is a community of opinions and knowledge amongst men, in different nations, existing in a degree heretofore unknown. Knowledge has, in our time, triumphed, and is triumphing, over distance, over difference of languages, over diversity of habits, over prejudice, and over bigotry. The civilized and Christian world is fast learning the great lesson, that difference of nation does not imply necessary hostility, and that all contact need not be war. The whole world is becoming a common field for intellect to act in. Energy of mind, genius, power, wheresoever it exists, may speak out in any tongue, and the *world* will hear it. A great chord of sentiment and feeling runs through two continents, and vibrates over both. Every breeze wafts intelligence from country to country; every wave rolls it; all give it forth, and all in turn receive it. There is a vast commerce of ideas; there are marts and exchanges for intellectual discoveries, and a wonderful fellowship of those individual intelligences which make up the mind and opinion of the age. Mind is the great lever of all

things ; human thought is the process by which human ends are ultimately answered ; and the diffusion of knowledge, so astonishing in the last half century, has rendered innumerable minds, variously gifted by nature, competent to be competitors, or fellow-workers, on the theatre of intellectual operation.

From these causes, important improvements have taken place in the personal condition of individuals. Generally speaking, mankind are not only better fed, and better clothed, but they are able also to enjoy more leisure ; they possess more refinement and more self-respect. A superior tone of education, manners, and habits prevails. This remark, most true in its application to our own country, is also partly true, when applied elsewhere. It is proved by the vastly augmented consumption of those articles of manufacture and of commerce, which contribute to the comforts and the decencies of life ; an augmentation which has far outrun the progress of population. And while the unexampled and almost incredible use of machinery would seem to supply the place of labor, labor still finds its occupation and its reward ; so wisely has Providence adjusted men's wants and desires to their condition and their capacity.

Any adequate survey, however, of the progress made in the last half century, in the polite and the mechanic arts, in machinery and manufactures, in commerce and agriculture, in letters and in science, would require volumes. I must abstain wholly from these subjects, and turn, for a moment, to the contemplation of what has been done on the great question of politics and government. This is the master topic of the age ; and during the whole fifty years, it has intensely occupied the thoughts of men. The

nature of civil government, its ends and uses, have been canvassed and investigated; ancient opinions attacked and defended; new ideas recommended and resisted, by whatever power the mind of man could bring to the controversy. From the closet and the public halls the debate has been transferred to the field; and the world has been shaken by wars of unexampled magnitude, and the greatest variety of fortune. A day of peace has at length succeeded; and now that the strife has subsided, and the smoke cleared away, we may begin to see what has actually been done, permanently changing the state and condition of human society. And without dwelling on particular circumstances, it is most apparent, that, from the beforementioned causes of augmented knowledge and improved individual attention, a real, substantial, and important change has taken place, and is taking place, greatly beneficial, on the whole, to human liberty and human happiness.

The great wheel of political revolution began to move in America. Here its rotation was guarded, regular, and safe. Transferred to the other continent, from unfortunate but natural causes, it received an irregular and violent impulse; it whirled along with a fearful celerity; till at length, like the chariot wheels in the races of antiquity, it took fire from the rapidity of its own motion, and blazed onward, spreading conflagration and terror around.

We learn from the result of this experiment, how fortunate was our own condition, and how admirably the character of our people was calculated for making the great example of popular governments. The possession of power did not turn the heads of the American people, for they had long been in the habit

of exercising a great portion of self-control. Although the paramount authority of the parent state existed over them, yet a large field of legislation had always been open to our colonial assemblies. They were accustomed to representative bodies and the forms of free government; they understood the doctrine of the division of power among different branches, and the necessity of checks on each. The character of our countrymen, moreover, was sober, moral, and religious; and there was little in the change to shock their feelings of justice and humanity, or even to disturb an honest prejudice. We had no domestic throne to overturn, no privileged orders to cast down, no violent changes of property to encounter. In the American Revolution, no man sought or wished for more than to defend and enjoy his own. None hoped for plunder or for spoil. Rapacity was unknown to it; the axe was not among the instruments of its accomplishment; and we all know that it could not have lived a single day under any well founded imputation of possessing a tendency adverse to the Christian religion.

It need not surprise us, that, under circumstances less auspicious, political revolutions elsewhere, even when well intended, have terminated differently. It is, indeed, a great achievement, it is the master work of the world, to establish governments entirely popular, on lasting foundations; nor is it easy, indeed, to introduce the popular principle at all, into governments to which it has been altogether a stranger. It cannot be doubted, however, that Europe has come out of the contest, in which she has been so long engaged, with greatly superior knowledge, and, in many respects, a highly improved condition. Whatever

benefit has been acquired, is likely to be retained, for it consists mainly in the acquisition of more enlightened ideas. And although kingdoms and provinces may be wrested from the hands that hold them, in the same manner they were obtained; although ordinary and vulgar power may, in human affairs, be lost as it has been won; yet it is the glorious prerogative of the empire of knowledge, that what it gains it never loses. On the contrary, it increases by the multiple of its own power; all its ends become means; all its attainments, helps to new conquests. Its whole abundant harvest is but so much seed wheat, and nothing has ascertained, and nothing can ascertain, the amount of ultimate product.

Under the influence of this rapidly increasing knowledge, the people have begun, in all forms of government, to think, and to reason, on affairs of state. Regarding government as an institution for the public good, they demand a knowledge of its operations, and a participation in its exercise. A call for the Representative system, wherever it is not enjoyed, and where there is already intelligence enough to estimate its value, is perseveringly made. Where men may speak out, they demand it; where the bayonet is at their throats, they pray for it.

When Louis XIV said, "I am the state," he expressed the essence of the doctrine of unlimited power. By the rules of that system, the people are disconnected from the state; they are its subjects; it is their lord. These ideas, founded in the love of power, and long supported by the excess and the abuse of it, are yielding, in our age, to other opinions; and the civilized world seems at last to be proceeding to the conviction of that fundamental and

manifest truth, that the powers of government are but a trust, and that they cannot be lawfully exercised but for the good of the community. As knowledge is more and more extended, this conviction becomes more and more general. Knowledge, in truth, is the great sun in the firmament. Life and power are scattered with all its beams. The prayer of the Grecian combatant, when enveloped in unnatural clouds and darkness, is the appropriate political supplication for the people of every country not yet blessed with free institutions;

‘ Dispel this cloud, the light of heaven restore,
Give me TO SEE— and Ajax asks no more.’

We may hope, that the growing influence of enlightened sentiments will promote the permanent peace of the world. Wars, to maintain family alliances, to uphold or to cast down dynasties, to regulate successions to thrones, which have occupied so much room in the history of modern times, if not less likely to happen at all, will be less likely to become general and involve many nations, as the great principle shall be more and more established, that the interest of the world is peace, and its first great statute, that every nation possesses the power of establishing a government for itself. But public opinion has attained also an influence over governments, which do not admit the popular principle into their organization. A necessary respect for the judgment of the world operates, in some measure, as a control over the most unlimited forms of authority. It is owing, perhaps, to this truth, that the interesting struggle of the Greeks has been suffered to go on so long, without direct interference, either to wrest that country from

its present masters, and add it to other powers, or to execute the system of pacification by force, and, with united strength, lay the neck of Christian and civilized Greece at the foot of the barbarian Turk. Let us thank God that we live in an age, when something has influence besides the bayonet, and when the sternest authority does not venture to encounter the scorching power of public reproach. Any attempt of the kind I have mentioned, should be met by one universal burst of indignation; the air of the civilized world ought to be made too warm to be comfortably breathed by any who would hazard it.

It is, indeed, a touching reflection, that while, in the fulness of our country's happiness, we rear this monument to her honor, we look for instruction, in our undertaking, to a country which is now in fearful contest, not for works of art or memorials of glory, but for her own existence. Let her be assured, that she is not forgotten in the world; that her efforts are applauded, and that constant prayers ascend for her success. And let us cherish a confident hope for her final triumph. If the true spark of religious and civil liberty be kindled, it will burn. Human agency cannot extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire it may be smothered for a time; the ocean may overwhelm it; mountains may press it down; but its inherent and unconquerable force will heave both the ocean and the land, and at some time or another, in some place or another, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven.

Among the great events of the half century, we must reckon, certainly, the Revolution of South America; and we are not likely to overrate the importance of that Revolution, either to the people of

the country itself or to the rest of the world. The late Spanish colonies, now independent states, under circumstances less favorable, doubtless, than attended our own Revolution, have yet successfully commenced their national existence. They have accomplished the great object of establishing their independence; they are known and acknowledged in the world; and although in regard to their systems of government, their sentiments on religious toleration, and their provisions for public instruction, they may have yet much to learn, it must be admitted that they have risen to the condition of settled and established states, more rapidly than could have been reasonably anticipated. They already furnish an exhilarating example of the difference between free governments and despotic misrule. Their commerce, at this moment, creates a new activity in all the great marts of the world. They show themselves able, by an exchange of commodities, to bear an useful part in the intercourse of nations. A new spirit of enterprise and industry begins to prevail; all the great interests of society receive a salutary impulse; and the progress of information not only testifies to an improved condition, but constitutes, itself, the highest and most essential improvement.

When the battle of Bunker Hill was fought, the existence of South America was scarcely felt in the civilized world. The thirteen little colonies of North America habitually called themselves the 'Continent.' Borne down by colonial subjugation, monopoly, and bigotry, these vast regions of the South were hardly visible above the horizon. But in our day there hath been, as it were, a new creation. The Southern Hemisphere emerges from the sea. Its lofty moun-

tains begin to lift themselves into the light of heaven ; its broad and fertile plains stretch out, in beauty, to the eye of civilized man, and at the mighty bidding of the voice of political liberty the waters of darkness retire.

And, now, let us indulge an honest exultation in the conviction of the benefit, which the example of our country has produced, and is likely to produce, on human freedom and human happiness. And let us endeavour to comprehend, in all its magnitude, and to feel, in all its importance, the part assigned to us in the great drama of human affairs. We are placed at the head of the system of representative and popular governments. Thus far our example shows, that such governments are compatible, not only with respectability and power, but with repose, with peace, with security of personal rights, with good laws, and a just administration.

We are not propagandists. Wherever other systems are preferred, either as being thought better in themselves, or as better suited to existing condition, we leave the preference to be enjoyed. Our history hitherto proves, however, that the popular form is practicable, and that with wisdom and knowledge men may govern themselves ; and the duty incumbent on us is, to preserve the consistency of this cheering example, and take care that nothing may weaken its authority with the world. If, in our case, the Representative system ultimately fail, popular governments must be pronounced impossible. No combination of circumstances more favorable to the experiment can ever be expected to occur. The last hopes of mankind, therefore, rest with us ; and if it should be proclaimed, that our example had become

an argument against the experiment, the knell of popular liberty would be sounded throughout the earth.

These are excitements to duty ; but they are not suggestions of doubt. Our history and our condition, all that is gone before us, and all that surrounds us authorize the belief, that popular governments, though subject to occasional variations, perhaps not always for the better, in form, may yet, in their general character, be as durable and permanent as other systems. We know, indeed, that, in our country, any other is impossible. The *Principle* of Free Governments adheres to the American soil. It is bedded in it ; immovable as its mountains.

And let the sacred obligations which have devolved * on this generation, and on us, sink deep into our hearts. Those are daily dropping from among us who established our liberty and our government. The great trust now descends to new hands. Let us apply ourselves to that which is presented to us, as our appropriate object. We can win no laurels in a war for Independence. Earlier and worthier hands have gathered them all. Nor are there places for us by the side of Solon, and Alfred, and other founders of states. Our fathers have filled them. But there remains to us a great duty of defence and preservation ; and there is opened to us, also, a noble pursuit, to which the spirit of the times strongly invites us. Our proper business is improvement. Let our age be the age of improvement. In a day of peace, let us advance the arts of peace and the works of peace. Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day

and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered. Let us cultivate a true spirit of union and harmony. In pursuing the great objects, which our condition points out to us, let us act under a settled conviction, and an habitual feeling, that these twenty-four states are one country. Let our conceptions be enlarged to the circle of our duties. Let us extend our ideas over the whole of the vast field in which we are called to act. Let our object be, **OUR COUNTRY, OUR WHOLE COUNTRY, AND NOTHING BUT OUR COUNTRY.** And, by the blessing of God, may that country itself become a vast and splendid Monument, not of oppression and terror, but of Wisdom, of Peace and of Liberty, upon which the world may gaze, with admiration, forever.

Leigh Hunt (1784-1859)

STICKS

The use of sticks in general is of the very greatest antiquity. It is impossible to conceive a state of society in which boughs should not be plucked from trees for some purpose of utility or amusement. Savages use clubs, hunters require lances, and shepherds their crooks. Then came the sceptre, which is originally nothing but a staff, or a lance, or a crook, distinguished from others. The Greek word for sceptre signifies also a walking-stick. A mace, however plumped up and disguised with gilding and a heavy crown, is only the same thing in the hands of an inferior ruler; and so are all other sticks used in office, from the baton of the Grand Constable of France down to the tipstaff of a constable in Bowstreet. As the shepherd's dog is the origin of the gentlest whelp that lies on a hearth-cushion, and of the most pompous barker that jumps about a pair of greys, so the merest stick used by a modern Arcadian, when he is driving his flock to Leadenhall-market with a piece of candle in his hat, and No. 554 on his arm, is the first great parent and original of all authoritative staves, from the beadle's cane wherewith he terrifies charity-boys who eat bull's-eyes in church-time, up to the silver mace of the verger, to the wands of parishes and governors,—the tasselled staff, wherewith the Band-Major so loftily picks out his measured way before the musicians, and which he holds up when they are to cease; to the White Staff

of the Lord Treasurer; the court-officer emphatically called the Lord Gold Stick; the Bishop's Crosier (Pedum Episcopale), whereby he is supposed to pull back the feet of his straying flock; and the royal and imperial sceptre aforesaid, whose holders, formerly called Shepherds of the people (Ποιμῆνες νότα), were seditiously said to fleece more than to protect. The Vaulting-Staff, a luxurious instrument of exercise, must have been used in times immemorial for passing streams and rough ground with. It is the ancestor of the staff with which Pilgrims travelled. The Staff and Quarter-Staff of the country Robin Hoods is a remnant of the war-club. So is the Irish Shilelah, which a friend has well defined to be "a stick with two butt-ends." The originals of all these, that are not extant in our own country, may still be seen wherever there are nations uncivilised. The Negro Prince, who asked our countrymen what was said of him in Europe, was surrounded in state with a parcel of ragged fellows with shilelahs over their shoulders—Lord Old Sticks.

But sticks have been great favourites with civilised as well as uncivilised nations; only the former have used them more for help and ornament. The Greeks were a sceptropherous people. Homer probably used a walking-stick because he was blind; but we have it on authority that Socrates did. On his first meeting with Xenophon, which was in a narrow passage, he barred up the way with his stick, and asked him, in his good-natured manner, where provisions were to be had. Xenophon having told him, he asked again, if he knew where virtue and wisdom were to be had; and this reducing the young man to a non-plus, he said, "Follow me, and learn"; which

Xenophon did, and became the great man we have all heard of. The fatherly story of Agesilaus, who was caught amusing his little boy with riding on a stick, and asked his visitor whether he was a father, is too well known for repetition.

There is an illustrious anecdote connected with our subject in Roman history. The highest compliment which his countrymen thought they could pay to the first Scipio, was to call him a walking-stick; for such is the signification of his name. It was given him for the filial zeal with which he used to help his old father about, serving his decrepit age instead of a staff. But the Romans were not remarkable for sentiment. What we hear in general of their sticks, is the thumpings which servants get in their plays; and above all, the famous rods which the lictors carried, and which being actual sticks, must have inflicted horrible dull bruises and malignant stripes. They were pretty things, it must be confessed, to carry before the chief-magistrate! just as if the King or the Lord Chancellor were to be preceded by a cat-o'-nine-tails.

Sticks are not at all in such request with modern times as they were. Formerly, we suspect, most of the poorer ranks in England used to carry them, both on account of the prevalence of manly sports, and for security in travelling; for before the invention of posts and mail-coaches, a trip to Scotland or Northumberland was a thing to make a man write his will. As they came to be ornamented, fashion adopted them. The Cavaliers of Charles the First's time were a sticked race, as well as the apostolic divines and puritans, who appear to have carried staves, because they read of them among the patriarchs. Charles

the First, when at his trial, held out his stick to forbid the Attorney-General's proceeding. There is an interesting little story connected with a stick, which is related of Andrew Marvell's father, (worthy of such a son), and which, as it is little known, we will repeat; though it respects the man more than the machine. He had been visited by a young lady, who in spite of a stormy evening persisted in returning across the Humber, because her family would be alarmed at her absence. The old gentleman, high-hearted and cheerful, after vainly trying to dissuade her from perils which he understood better than she, resolved in his gallantry to bear her company. He accordingly walked with her down to the shore, and getting into the boat, threw his stick to a friend, with a request, in a lively tone of voice, that he would preserve it for a keep-sake. He then cried out merrily "Ho-hoy for heaven!" and put off with his visitor. They were drowned.

As commerce increased, exotic sticks grew in request from the Indies. Hence the Bamboo, the Whanghee, the Jambée which makes such a genteel figure under Mr. Lilly's auspices in the Tatler; and our light modern cane, which the Sunday stroller buys at sixpence the piece, with a twist of it at the end for a handle. The physicians, till within the last few score of years, retained among other fopperies which they converted into gravities, the wig and gold-headed cane. The latter had been an indispensable sign-royal of fashion, and was turned to infinite purposes of accomplished gesticulation. One of the most courtly personages in the *Rape of the Lock* is

Sir Plume, of amber snuff-box justly vain,
And the nice conduct of a clouded cane.

Sir Richard Steele, as we have before noticed, is reproached by a busy-body of those times for a habit of jerking his stick against the pavement as he walked. When swords were abolished by Act of Parliament, the tavern-boys took to pinking each other, as injuriously as they could well manage, with their walking-sticks. Macklin the player was tried for his life for poking a man's eye out in this way. Perhaps this helped to bring the stick into disrepute; for the use of it seems to have declined more and more, till it is now confined to old men, and a few among the younger. It is unsuitable to our money-getting mode of rushing hither and thither. Instead of pinking a man's ribs or so, or thrusting out his eye from an excess of the jovial, we break his heart with a bankruptcy.

Canes became so common before the decline of the use of sticks, that whenever a man is beaten with a stick, let it be of what sort it may, it is still common to say that he has had a "caning": which reminds us of an anecdote more agreeable than surprising; though the patient doubtless thought the reverse. A gentleman, who was remarkable for the amenity of his manners, accompanied by a something which a bully might think it safe to presume upon, found himself compelled to address a person who did not know how to "translate his style," in the following words, which were all delivered in the sweetest tone in the world, with an air of almost hushing gentility:—"Sir, I am extremely sorry—to be obliged to say,—that you appear to have a very erroneous notion of the manners that become your situation in life;—and I am compelled with great reluctance, to add," (here he became still softer and more delicate) "that, if you do not

think fit, upon reflection, to alter this very extraordinary conduct towards a gentleman, I shall be under the necessity of—caning you.” The other treated the thing as a joke; and to the delight of the bystanders, received a very grave drubbing.

There are two eminent threats connected with caning, in the history of Dr. Johnson. One was from himself, when he was told that Foote intended to mimic him on the stage. He replied, that if “the dog” ventured to play his tricks with him, he would step out of the stage-box, chastise him before the audience, and then throw himself upon their candour and common sympathy. Foote desisted, as he had good reason to do. The Doctor would have read him a stout lesson, and then made a speech to the audience as forcible; so that the theatrical annals have to regret, that the subject and Foote’s shoulders were not afforded him to expatiate upon. It would have been a fine involuntary piece of acting,—the part of Scipio by Dr. Johnson.—The other threat was against the Doctor himself from Macpherson, the compounder of Ossian. It was for denying the authenticity of that work; a provocation the more annoying, inasmuch as he did not seem duly sensible of its merits. Johnson replied to Macpherson’s letter by one of contemptuous brevity and pith; and contented himself with carrying about a large stick, with which he intended to repel Macpherson in case of an assault. Had they met, it would have been like “two clouds over the Caspian”; for both were large-built men.

We recollect another bacular Johnsonian anecdote. When he was travelling in Scotland, he lost a huge stick of his in the little treeless island of Mull. Boswell told him he would recover it: but the Doctor

shook his head. "No, no," said he; "let anybody in Mull get possession of it, and it will never be restored. Consider, Sir, the value of such a piece of timber here."

The most venerable sticks now surviving are the smooth amber-coloured canes, in the possession of old ladies. They have sometimes a gold head, but oftener a crook of ivory. But they have latterly been much displaced by light umbrellas, the handles of which are imitations of them; and these are gradually retreating before the young parasol, especially about town. The old ladies take the wings of the stage-coaches, and are run away with by John Pullen, in a style of infinite convenience. The other sticks in use are for the most part of cherry, oak, and crab, and seldom adorned with more than a leathern tassel: often with nothing. Bamboo and other canes do not abound, as might be expected from our intercourse with India; but commerce in this as in other respects has overshot its mark. People cannot afford to use sticks, any more than bees could in their hives. Of the common sabbatical cane we have already spoken. There is a sufficing little manual, equally light and lissom, yecept an ebony switch; but we have not seen it often.

That sticks, however, are not to be despised by the leisurely, any one who has known what it is to want words, or to slice off the head of a thistle, will allow. The utility of the stick seems divisible into three heads: first, to give a general consciousness of power; second, which may be called a part of the first, to help the demeanour; and third, which may be called a part of the second, to assist a man over the gaps of speech—the little awkward intervals, called want of ideas.

Deprive a man of his stick, who is accustomed to carry one, and with what a diminished sense of vigour and gracefulness he issues out of his house! Wanting his stick, he wants himself. His self-possession, like Acres's on the duel-ground, has gone out of his fingers' ends; but restore it him, and how he resumes his energy! If a common walking-stick, he cherishes the top of it with his fingers, putting them out and back again, with a fresh desire to feel it in his palm! How he strikes it against the ground, and feels power come back to his arm! How he makes the payment ring with the ferule, if in a street; or decapitates the downy thistles aforesaid, if in a field! Then if it be a switch, how firmly he jerks his step at the first infliction of it on the air! How he quivers the point of it as he goes, holding the handle with a straight-dropped arm and a tight grasp! How his foot keeps time to the switches! How he twigs the luckless pieces of lilac or other shrubs, that peep out of a garden railing! And if a sneaking-looking dog is coming by, how he longs to exercise his despotism and his moral sense at once, by giving him an invigorating twinge!

But what would certain men of address do without their cane or switch? There is an undoubted Rhabdosophy, Sceptrosophy, or Wisdom of the Stick, besides the famous Divining Rod, with which people used to discover treasures and fountains. It supplies a man with inaudible remarks, and an inexpressible number of graces. Sometimes, breathing between his teeth, he will twirl the end of it upon his stretched-out toe; and this means, that he has an infinite number of easy and powerful things to say, if he had a mind. Sometimes he holds it upright between his

knees, and tattoos it against his teeth or under-lip, which implies that he meditates coolly. On other occasions he switches the side of his boot with it, which announces elegance in general. Lastly, if he has not a bon-mot ready in answer to one, he has only to thrust his stick at your ribs, and say, "Ah! you rogue!" which sets him above you in an instant, as a sort of patronising wit, who can dispense with the necessity of joking.

At the same time, to give it its due zest in life, a stick has its inconveniences. If you have yellow gloves on, and drop it in the mud, a too hasty recovery is awkward. To have it stick between the stones of a pavement is not pleasant, especially if it snap the ferule off; or more especially if an old gentleman or lady is coming behind you, and after making them start back with winking eyes, it threatens to trip them up. To lose the ferule on a country road, renders the end liable to the growth of a sordid brush, which, not having a knife with you, or a shop in which to borrow one, goes pounding the wet up against your legs. In a crowded street you may have the stick driven into a large pane of glass; upon which an unthinking tradesman, utterly indifferent to a chain of events, issues forth and demands twelve and six-pence.

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

Son cœur est un luth suspendu ;
Sitôt qu'on le touche il résonne.

BERANGER.

During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country ; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was—but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable ; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain, upon the bleak walls, upon the vacant eye-like windows, upon a few rank sedges, and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveller upon opium : the bitter lapse into everyday life, the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart, an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goading of the imagination could

torture into aught of the sublime. What was it—I paused to think—what was ~~it~~ that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion, that while, beyond doubt, there *are* combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate, its capacity for sorrowful impression; and acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled lustre by the dwelling, and gazed down—but with a shudder even more thrilling than before—upon the remodelled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows.

Nevertheless, in this mansion of gloom I now proposed to myself a sojourn of some weeks. Its proprietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting. A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country—a letter from him—which in its wildly importunate nature had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness, of a mental disorder which oppressed him, and of an earnest desire to see me, as his best and indeed his only personal friend, with a view of attempting, by the cheerfulness of my society,

some alleviation of his malady. It was the manner in which all this, and much more, was said—it was the apparent *heart* that went with his request—which allowed me no room for hesitation; and I accordingly obeyed forthwith what I still considered a very singular summons.

Although as boys we had been even intimate associates, yet I really knew little of my friend. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual. I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament, displaying itself, through long ages, in many works of exalted art, and manifested of late in repeated deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognisable beauties of musical science. I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honored as it was, had put forth at no period any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain. It was this deficiency, I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people, and while speculating upon the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other—it was this deficiency, perhaps, of collateral issue, and the consequent undeviating transmission from sire to son of the patrimony with the name, which had, at length, so identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the “House of Usher”

—an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion.

I have said that the sole effect of my somewhat childish experiment, that of looking down within the tarn, had been to deepen the first singular impression. There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition—for why should I not so term it?—served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis. And it might have been for this reason only, that, when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself, from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy—a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity: an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn: a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued.

Shaking off from my spirit what *must* have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled webwork from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between

its still perfect adaptation of parts and the crumbling condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded one of the specious totality of old wood-work which has rotted for long years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me, in silence, through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the studio of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me—while the carvings of the ceilings, the sombre tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies which rattled as I strode, were but matters to which, or to such as which, I had been accustomed from my infancy—while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this—I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. On one of the staircases, I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed

on. The valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around; the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa on which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality—of the constrained effort of the *ennuyé* man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance, convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down; and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times remarkable. A cadaverousness of complexion; an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison;

lips somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surpassingly beautiful curve; a nose of a delicate Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely moulded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy; hair of a more than web-like softness and tenuity; these features, with an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily to be forgotten. And now in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke. The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous lustre of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded, and as, in its wild gossamer texture, it floated rather than fell about the face, I could not, even with effort, connect its arabesque expression with any idea of simple humanity.

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence, an inconsistency; and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome an habitual trepidancy, an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar physical conformation and temperament. His action was alternately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in abeyance) to that species of energetic concision—that abrupt, weighty, unhurried, and hollow-sounding enunciation—that leaden,

self-balanced and perfectly modulated guttural utterance—which may be observed in the lost drunkard, or the irreclaimable eater of opium, during the periods of his most intense excitement.

It was thus that he spoke of the object of my visit, of his earnest desire to see me, and of the solace he expected me to afford him. He entered, at some length, into what he conceived to be the nature of his malady. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy—a mere nervous affection, he immediately added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off. It displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations. Some of these, as he detailed them, interested and bewildered me; although, perhaps, the terms and the general manner of the narration had their weight. He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses; the most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror.

To an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave. “I shall perish,” said he, “I *must* perish in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost. I dread the events of the future, not in themselves, but in their results. I shudder at the thought of any, even the most trivial, incident, which may operate upon this intolerable agitation of soul. I have, indeed, no abhorrence of danger, except in its absolute effect—in terror. In this unnerved—in this pitiable condition, I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must

abandon life and reason together, in some struggle with the grim phantasm, FEAR."

I learned moreover at intervals, and through broken and equivocal hints, another singular feature of his mental condition. He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence, for many years, he had never ventured forth—in regard to an influence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be re-stated—an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion, had, by dint of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit—an effect which the physique of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had, at length, brought about upon the morale of his existence.

He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin—to the severe and long-continued illness, indeed to the evidently approaching dissolution, of a tenderly beloved sister—his sole companion for long years, his last and only relative on earth. "Her decease," he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, "would leave him (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers." While he spoke, the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread, and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps. When a door, at length,

closed upon her, my glance sought instinctively and eagerly the countenance of the brother; but he had buried his face in his hands, and I could only perceive that a far more than ordinary wanness had overspread the emaciated fingers through which trickled many passionate tears.

The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed; but, on the closing in of the evening of my arrival at the house, she succumbed (as her brother told me at night with inexpressible agitation) to the prostrating power of the destroyer; and I learned that the glimpse I had obtained of her person would thus probably be the last I should obtain—that the lady, at least while living, would be seen by me no more.

For several days ensuing, her name was unmentioned by either Usher or myself; and during this period I was busied in earnest endeavours to alleviate the melancholy of my friend. We painted and read together; or I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisations of his speaking guitar. And thus, as a closer and still closer intimacy admitted me more unreservedly into the recesses of his spirit, the more bitterly did I perceive the futility of all attempt at cheering a mind from which darkness, as if an inherent positive quality, poured forth upon all objects of the moral and physical universe, in one unceasing radiation of gloom.

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in any attempt to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies, or of the occupations, in which he involved me, or led me the way. An excited and highly distempered ideality threw a sulphurous lustre over all. His long improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber. From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vaguenesses at which I shuddered the more thrillingly because I shuddered knowing not why;—from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavour to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and overawed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher. For me at least, in the circumstances then surrounding me, there arose, out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvas, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words. A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device. Certain accessory points of the design

served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an exceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its vast extent, and no torch or other artificial source of light was discernible; yet a flood of intense rays rolled throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was, perhaps, the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid *facility* of his impromptus could not be so accounted for. They must have been, and were, in the notes, as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rhymed verbal improvisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily remembered. I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it, as he gave it, because, in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness, on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled "The Haunted Palace," ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus:—

I

In the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,

Once a fair and stately palace—
Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion
It stood there;
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair.

II

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow,
(This—all this—was in the olden
Time long ago)
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A winged odor went away.

III

Wanderers in that happy valley
Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
To a lute's well-tuned law,
Round about a throne where sitting,
Porphyrogene,
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

IV

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
And sparkling evermore,

A troop of Echoes whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

V

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him, desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

VI

And travellers now within that valley
Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody;
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh—but smile no more.

I well remember that suggestions arising from this ballad led us into a train of thought, wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's which I mention not so much on account of its novelty (for other men* have thought thus), as on account of the pertinacity with which he maintained it. This

* Watson, Dr. Percival, Spallanzani, and especially the Bishop of Landaff.—See "Chemical Essays," Vol. V.

opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentience of all vegetable things. But in his disordered fancy the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of inorganization. I lack words to express the full extent, or the earnest *abandon* of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have previously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentience had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collocation of these stones—in the order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many fungi which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around—above all, in the long undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence—the evidence of the sentience—was to be seen, he said—(and I here started as he spoke), in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent, yet importunate and terrible influence which for centuries had moulded the destinies of his family, and which made *him* what I now saw him—what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books—the books which, for years, had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid—were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the *Ververt* and *Chartreuse* of Gresset; the *Belphegor* of Machiavelli; the *Heaven and Hell* of Swedenborg; the *Subterranean Voyage* of Nicholas Klimm by Holberg; the *Chiromancy* of Robert Flud, of Jean D'Indaginé, and

of Dela Chambre; the Journey into the Blue Distance of Tieck; and the City of the Sun of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the *Directorium Inquisitorium*, by the Dominican Eymeric de Gironne; and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Ægipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic—the manual of a forgotten church—the *Vigilæ Mortuorum secundum chorum Ecclesiæ Maguntinæ*.

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypochondriac, when one evening, having informed me abruptly that the lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight (previously to its final interment), in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The worldly reason, however, assigned for the singular proceeding, was on which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical man, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial-ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but a harmless, and by no means an unnatural precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment.

The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp, and entirely without means of admission for light, lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that portion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used, apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon-keep, and in later days as a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustible substance, as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door, of massive iron, had been, also, similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound, as it moved upon its hinges.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention; and Usher, divining, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead—for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously

lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and, having secured the odor of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue—but the luminousness of his eye had utterly gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more; and a tremulous quaver, as if of extreme terror, habitually characterized his utterance. There were times, indeed, when I thought this unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times, again, I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness, for I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours, in an attitude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound. It was no wonder that his condition terrified—that it infected me. I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions.

It was, especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch, while the hours waned and

waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I endeavoured to believe that much, if not all, of what I felt was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room—of the dark and tattered draperies which, tortured into motion by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruitless. An irrepressible tremor gradually pervaded my frame; and at length there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shaking this off with a gasp and a struggle, I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and, peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, hearkened—I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me—to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste (for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night), and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitiable condition into which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase arrested my attention. I presently recognized it as that of Usher. In an instant afterward he rapped with a gentle touch at my door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan—but, moreover, there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes—an evidently restrained hysteria in his whole demeanor. His air appalled me—but anything was

preferable to the solitude which I had so long endured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

“And you have not seen it?” he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence—“you have not then seen it?—but, stay! you shall.” Thus speaking, and having carefully shaded his lamp, he hurried to one of the casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted us from our feet. It was, indeed, a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirlwind had apparently collected its force in our vicinity; for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind; and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the life-like velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this; yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars, nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under surfaces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as all terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

“You must not—you shall not behold this!” said I, shudderingly, to Usher, as I led him with a gentle violence from the window to a seat. “These appearances, which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon—or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the

tarn. Let us close this casement; the air is chilling and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read, and you shall listen;—and so we will pass away this terrible night together.

The antique volume which I had taken up was the “*Mad Trist*” of Sir Launcelot Canning; but I had called it a favorite of Usher’s more in sad jest than in earnest; for, in truth, there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and spiritual ideality of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand; and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, indeed, by the wild overstrained air of vivacity with which he hearkened, or apparently hearkened, to the words of the tale, I might well have congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the *Trist*, having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus:—

“ And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal, on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who, in sooth, was of an obstinate and maliceful turn, but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and

with blows made quickly room in the plankings of the door for his gauntleted hand; and now pulling therewith sturdily, he so cracked, and ripped, and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarumed and reverberated throughout the forest."

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me)—it appeared to me that from some very remote portion of the mansion there came, indistinctly, to my ears, what might have been, in its exact similarity of character, the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was, beyond doubt, the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention; for, amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still increasing storm, the sound, in itself, had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story:—

" But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the malicious hermit; but, in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sate in guard before a palace of gold, with a floor of silver; and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten—

' Who entered herein, a conqueror hath bin;

Who slayeth the dragon, the shield he shall win.'

And Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the

head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard."

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement; for there could be no doubt whatever that, in this instance, I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound—the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed, as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my companion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question; although, assuredly, a strange alteration had during the last few minutes taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber; and thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast—yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide and rigid opening of the eye as I caught a glance of it in profile. The motion of his

body, too, was at variance with this idea—for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded:—

“ And now, the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valorously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall; which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound.”

No sooner had these syllabus passed my lips, than—as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic and clangorous, yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet; but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But, as I placed my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person; a sickly smile quivered about his lips; and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

“ Not hear it,—yes, I hear it and *have* heard it. Long—long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it—yet I dared not—oh,

pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! *We have put her living in the tomb!* Said I not that my senses were acute? I *now* tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—I *dared* not speak! And now—to-night—Ethelred—ha, ! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield!—say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault! Oh, whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? Madman!"—here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul—"Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!"

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell, the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust—but then without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher. There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and, in her violent and now final death-agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim of the terrors he had anticipated.

From that chamber, and from that mansion, I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely-discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the “*House of Usher*.”

Alexander Smith (1830-1867)

DREAMTHORP*

It matters not to relate how or when I became a denizen of Dreamthorp; it will be sufficient to say that I am not a born native, but that I came to reside in it a good while ago now. The several towns and villages in which, in my time, I have pitched a tent did not please, for one obscure reason or another: this one was too large, t' other too small; but when, on a summer evening about the hour of eight, I first beheld Dreamthorp, with its westward-looking windows painted by sunset, its children playing in the single straggling street, the mothers knitting at the open doors, the fathers standing about in long white blouses, chatting or smoking; the great tower of the ruined castle rising high into the rosy air, with a whole troop of swallows—by distance made as small as gnats—skimming about its rents and fissures;—when I first beheld all this, I felt instinctively that my knapsack might be taken off my shoulders, that my tired feet might wander no more, that at last, on the planet, I had found a home. From that evening I have dwelt here, and the only journey I am like now to make, is the very inconsiderable one, so far at least as distance is concerned, from the house in which I live to the graveyard beside the ruined castle.

* From *Dreamthorp, etc.*, by kind permission of the publishers, The Oxford University Press.

There, with the former inhabitants of the place, I trust to sleep quietly enough, and nature will draw over our heads her coverlet of green sod, and tenderly tuck us in, as a mother her sleeping ones, so that no sound from the world shall ever reach us, and no sorrow trouble us any more.

The village stands far inland; and the streams that trot through the soft green valleys all about have as little knowledge of the sea, as the three-years' child of the storms and passions of manhood. The surrounding country is smooth and green, full of undulations; and pleasant country roads strike through it in every direction, bound for distant towns and villages, yet in no hurry to reach them. On these roads the lark in summer is continually heard; nests are plentiful in the hedges and dry ditches; and on the grassy banks, and at the feet of the bowed dikes, the blue-eyed speedwell smiles its benison on the passing wayfarer. On these roads you may walk for a year and encounter nothing more remarkable than the country cart, troops of tawny children from the woods, laden with primroses, and at long intervals—for people in this district live to a ripe age—a black funeral creeping in from some remote hamlet; and to this last the people reverently doff their hats and stand aside. Death does not walk about here often, but when he does, he receives as much respect as the squire himself. Everything round one is unhurried, quiet, moss-grown, and orderly. Season follows in the track of season, and one year can hardly be distinguished from another. Time should be measured here by the silent dial, rather than by the ticking clock, or by the chimes of the church. Dreamthorp can boast of a respectable antiquity, and in it the

trade of the builder is unknown. Ever since I remember, not a single stone has been laid on the top of another. The castle, inhabited now by jackdaws and starlings, is old; the chapel which adjoins it is older still; and the lake behind both, and in which their shadows sleep, is, I suppose, as old as Adam. A fountain in the market-place, all mouths and faces and curious arabesques—as dry, however as the castle moat—has a tradition connected with it; and a great noble riding through the street one day several hundred years ago, was shot from a window by a man whom he had injured. The death of this noble is the chief link which connects the place with authentic history. The houses are old, and remote dates may yet be deciphered on the stones above the doors; the apple-trees are mossed and ancient; countless generations of sparrows have bred in the thatched roofs, and thereon have chirped out their lives. In every room of the place men have been born, men have died. On Dreamthorp centuries have fallen, and have left no more trace than have last winter's snowflakes. This commonplace sequence and flowing on of life is immeasurably affecting. That winter morning when Charles lost his head in front of the banqueting-hall of his own palace, the icicles hung from the eaves of the houses here, and the clown kicked the snowballs from his clouted shoon, and thought but of his supper when, at three o'clock, the red sun set in the purple mist. On that Sunday in June while Waterloo was going on, the gossips, after morning service, stood on the country roads discussing agricultural prospects, without the slightest suspicion that the day passing over their heads would be a famous one in the calendar. Battles have been fought, kings have died,

history has transacted itself; but, all unheeding and untouched, Dreamthorp has watched apple-trees redden, and wheat ripen, and smoked its pipe, and quaffed its mug of beer, and rejoiced over its new-born children, and with proper solemnity carried its dead to the churchyard. As I gaze on the village of my adoption, I think of many things very far removed, and seem to get closer to them. The last setting sun that Shakespeare saw reddened the windows here, and struck warmly on the faces of the hinds coming home from the fields. The mighty storm that raged while Cromwell lay a-dying made all the oak-woods groan round about here, and tore the thatch from the very roofs I gaze upon. When I think of this, I can almost, so to speak, lay my hand on Shakespeare and on Cromwell. These poor walls were contemporaries of both, and I find something affecting in the thought. The mere soil is, of course, far older than either, but it does not touch one in the same way. A wall is the creation of a human hand, the soil is not.

This place suits my whim, and I like it better year after year. As with everything else, since I began to love it I find it gradually growing beautiful. Dreamthorp—a castle, a chapel, a lake, a straggling strip of gray houses, with a blue film of smoke over all—lies embosomed in emerald. Summer, with its daisies, runs up to every cottage door. From the little height where I am now sitting, I see it beneath me. Nothing could be more peaceful. The wind and the birds fly over it. A passing sunbeam makes brilliant a white gable-end, and brings out the colours of the blossomed apple-tree beyond, and disappears. I see figures in the street, but hear them not. The hands on the church clock seem always pointing to one

hour. Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine. I make a frame of my fingers, and look at my picture. On the walls of the next Academy's Exhibition will hang nothing half so beautiful.

My village is, I think, a special favourite of summer's. Every window-sill in it she touches with colour and fragrance; everywhere she wakens the drowsy murmurs of the hives; every place she scents with apple-blossom. Traces of her hand are to be seen on the weir beside the ruined mill; and even the canal, along which the barges come and go, has a great white water-lily asleep on its olive-coloured face. Never was velvet on a monarch's robe so gorgeous as the green mosses that be-ruff the roofs of farm and cottage, when the sunbeam slants on them and goes. The old road out towards the common, and the hoary dikes that might have been built in the reign of Alfred, have not been forgotten by the generous adorning season; for every fissure has its mossy cushion, and the old blocks themselves are washed by the loveliest gray-green lichens in the world, and the large loose stones lying on the ground have gathered to themselves the peaceablest mossy coverings. Some of these have not been disturbed for a century. Summer has adorned my village as gaily, and taken as much pleasure in the task, as the people of old, when Elizabeth was queen, took in the adornment of the May-pole against a summer festival. And, just think, not only Dreamthorp, but every English village she has made beautiful after one fashion or another—making vivid green the hill slope on which straggling white Welsh hamlets hang right opposite the sea; drowning in apple-blossom the red Sussex ones in the fat valley. And think, once more, every spear of grass in England

she had touched with a livelier green; the crest of every bird she has burnished; every old wall between the four seas has received her mossy and licheny attentions; every nook in every forest she has sown with pale flowers, every marsh she has dashed with the fires of the marigold. And in the wonderful night the moon knows, she hangs—the planet on which so many millions of us fight, and sin, and agonise, and die—a sphere of glow-worm light.

Having discoursed so long about Dreamthorp, it is but fair that I should now introduce you to her lions. These are, for the most part, of a commonplace kind; and I am afraid that, if you wish to find romance in them, you must bring it with you. I might speak of the old church-tower, or of the churchyard beneath it, in which the village holds its dead, each resting-place marked by a simple stone, on which is inscribed the name and age of the sleeper, and a Scripture text beneath, in which live our hopes of immortality. But, on the whole, perhaps it will be better to begin with the canal, which wears on its olive-coloured face the big white water-lily already chronicled. Such a secluded place is Dreamthorp—that the railway does not come near, and the canal is the only thing that connects it with the world. It stands high, and from it the undulating country may be seen stretching away into the gray of distance, with hills and woods, and stains of smoke which mark the sites of villages. Every now and then a horse comes staggering along the towing-path, trailing a sleepy barge filled with merchandise. A quiet, indolent life these bargemen lead in the summer days. One lies stretched at his length on the sun-heated plank; his comrade sits smoking in the little dog

hutch, which I suppose he calls a cabin. Silently they come and go; silently the wooden bridge lifts to let them through. The horse stops at the bridge-house for a drink, and there I like to walk a little with the men. They served instead of a newspaper, and retail with great willingness the news they have picked up in their progress from town to town. I am told they sometimes marvel who the old gentleman is who accosts them from beneath a huge umbrella in the sun, and that they think him either very wise or very foolish. Not in the least unnatural! We are great friends, I believe—evidence of which they occasionally exhibit by requesting me to disburse a trifle for drink-money. This canal is a great haunt of mine of an evening. The water hardly invites one to bathe in it, and a delicate stomach might suspect the flavour of the eels caught therein; yet, to my thinking, it is not in the least destitute of beauty. A barge trailing up through it in the sunset is a pretty sight; and the heavenly crimsons and purples sleep quite lovingly upon its glossy ripples. Nor does the evening star disdain it, for as I walk along I see it mirrored therein as clearly as in the waters of the Mediterranean itself.

The old castle and chapel already alluded to are, perhaps, to a stranger, the points of attraction in Dreamthorp. Back from the houses is the lake, on the green sloping banks of which, with broken windows and tombs, the ruins stand. As it is noon, and the weather is warm, let us go and sit on a turret. Here, on these very steps, as old ballads tell, a queen sat once, day after day, looking southward for the light of returning spears. I bethink me that yesterday, no further gone, I went to visit a consumptive shoemaker; seated here I can single out

his very house, nay, the very window of the room in which he is lying. On that straw roof might the raven alight, and flap his sable wings. There, at this moment, is the supreme tragedy being enacted. A woman is weeping there, and little children are looking on with a sore bewilderment. Before nightfall the poor peaked face of the bowed artisan will have gathered its ineffable peace, and the widow will be led away from the bedside by the tenderness of neighbours, and the cries of the orphan brood will be stilled. And yet this present indubitable suffering and loss does not touch me like the sorrow of the woman of the ballad, the phantom probably of a minstrel's brain. The shoemaker will be forgotten—I shall be forgotten; and long after visitors will sit here and look out on the landscape and murmur the simple lines. But why do death and dying obtrude themselves at the present moment? On the turret opposite, about the distance of a gunshot, is as pretty a sight as eye could wish to see. Two young people, strangers apparently, have come to visit the ruin. Neither the ballad queen, nor the shoemaker down yonder, whose respirations are getting shorter and shorter, touches them in the least. They are merry and happy, and the graybeard turret has not the heart to thrust a foolish moral upon them. They would not thank him if he did, I daresay. Perhaps they could not understand him. Time enough! Twenty years hence they will be able to sit down at his feet, and count griefs with him, and tell him tale for tale. Human hearts get ruinous in so much less time than stone walls and towers. See, the young man has thrown himself down at the girl's feet on a little space of grass. In her scarlet cloak she looks like a blossom springing

out of a crevice on the ruined steps. He gives her a flower, and she bows her face down over it almost to her knees. What did the flower say? Is it to hide a blush? He looks delighted; and I almost fancy I see a proud colour on his brow. As I gaze, these young people make for me a perfect idyl. The generous, ungrudging sun, the melancholy ruin, decked, like mad Lear, with the flowers and ivies of forgetfulness and grief, and between them, sweet and evanescent, human truth and love!

Love!—does it yet walk the world, or is it imprisoned in poems and romances? Has not the circulating library become the sole home of the passion? Is love not become the exclusive property of novelists and playwrights, to be used by them only for professional purposes? Surely, if the men I see are lovers, or ever have been lovers, they would be nobler than they are. The knowledge that he is beloved should—*must* make a man tender, gentle, upright, pure. While yet a youngster in a jacket, I can remember falling desperately in love with a young lady several years my senior—after the fashion of youngsters in jackets. Could I have fibbed in these days? Could I have betrayed a comrade? Could I have stolen eggs or callow young from the nest? Could I have stood quietly by and seen the weak or the maimed bullied? Nay, verily! In these absurd days she lighted up the whole world for me. To sit in the same room with her was like the happiness of perpetual holiday; when she asked me to run a message for her, or to do any, the slightest, service for her, I felt as if a patent of nobility were conferred on me. I kept my passion to myself, like a cake, and nibbled it in private. Juliet was several years my

senior, and had a lover—was, in point of fact, actually engaged and in looking back, I can remember I was too much in love to feel the slightest twinge of jealousy. I remember also seeing Romeo for the first time, and thinking him a greater man than Caesar or Napoleon. The worth I credited him with, the cleverness, the goodness, the everything! He awed me by his manner and bearing. He accepted that girl's love coolly and as a matter of course: it put him no more about than a crown and sceptre puts about a king. What I would have given my life to possess—being only fourteen, it was not much to part with after all—he wore lightly, as he wore his gloves or his cane. It did not seem a bit too good for him. His self-possession appalled me. If I had seen him take the sun out of the sky, and put it into his breeches' pocket, I don't think I should have been in the least degree surprised. Well, years after, when I had discarded my passion with my jacket, I have assisted this middle-aged Romeo home from a roystering wine-party, and heard him hiccup out his marital annoyances, with the strangest remembrances of old times, and the strangest deductions therefrom. Did that man with the idiotic laugh and the blurred utterance ever love? Was he ever capable of loving? I protest I have my doubts. But where are my young people? Gone! So it is always. We begin to moralise and look wise, and Beauty, who is something of a coquette, and of an exacting turn of mind, and likes attentions, gets disgusted with our wisdom or our stupidity, and goes off in a huff. Let the baggage go!

The ruined chapel adjoins the ruined castle on which I am now sitting, and is evidently a building of much older date. It is a mere shell now. It is quite

roofless, ivy covers it in part; the stone tracery of the great western window is yet intact, but the coloured glass is gone with the splendid vestments of the abbot, the fuming incense, the chanting choirs, and the patient, sad-eyed monks, who muttered Aves, shrived guilt, and illuminated missals. Time was when this place breathed actual benedictions, and was a home of active peace. At present it is visited only by the stranger, and delights but the antiquary. The village people have so little respect for it, that they do not even consider it haunted. There are several tombs in the interior bearing knights' escutcheons, which time has sadly defaced. The dust you stand upon is noble. Earls have been brought here in dinted mail from battle, and earls' wives from the pangs of child-bearing. The last trumpet will break the slumber of a right honourable company. One of the tombs—the most perfect of all in point of preservation—I look at often, and try to conjecture what it commemorates. With all my fancies, I can get no further than the old story of love and death. There, on the slab, the white figures sleep; marble hands, folded in prayer, on marble breasts. And I like to think that he was brave, she beautiful; that although the monument is worn by time, and sullied by the stains of the weather, the qualities which it commemorates—husbandly and wifely affection, courtesy, courage, knightly scorn of wrong and falsehood, meekness, penitence, charity—are existing yet somewhere, recognisable by each other. The man who in this world can keep the whiteness of his soul, is not likely to lose it in any other

In summer I spent a good deal of time floating about the lake. The landing-place to which my boat

is tethered is ruinous, like the chapel and palace, and my embarkation causes quite a stir in the sleepy little village. Small boys leave their games and mud-pies, and gather round in silence; they have seen me get off a hundred times, but their interest in the matter seems always new. Not unfrequently an idle cobbler, in red nightcap and leathern apron, leans on a broken stile, and honours my proceedings with his attention. I shoot off, and the human knot dissolves. The lake contains three islands, each with a solitary tree, and on these islands, the swans breed. I feed the birds daily with bits of bread. See, one comes gliding towards me, with superbly arched neck, to receive its customary alms! How widely beautiful its motions! How haughtily it begs! The green pasture lands run down to the edge of the water, and into it in the afternoons the red kine wade and stand knee-deep in their shadows, surrounded by troops of flies. Patiently the honest creatures abide the attacks of their tormentors. Now one swishes itself with its tail—now its neighbour flaps a huge ear. I draw my oars alongside, and let my boat float at its own will. The soft blue heavenly abysses, the wandering streams of vapour, the long beaches of rippled cloud, are glassed and repeated in the lake. Dreamthorp is silent as a picture, the voices of the children are mute; and the smoke from the houses, the blue pillars all sloping in one angle, float upwards as if in sleep. Grave and stern the old castle rises from its emerald banks, which long ago came down to the lake in terrace on terrace, gay, with fruits and flowers, and with stone nymph and satyrs hid in every nook. Silent and empty enough to-day! A flock of daws suddenly bursts out from a turret, and round and round they wheel, as if

in panic. Has some great scandal exploded ? Has a conspiracy been discovered ? Has a revolution broken out ? The excitement has subsided, and one of them, perched on the old banner-staff, chatters confidentially to himself as he, sideways, eyes the world beneath him. Floating about thus, time passes swiftly, for, before I know where I am, the kine have withdrawn from the lake to couch on the herbage, while one on a little height is lowing for the milkmaid and her pails. Along the road I see the labourers coming home for supper, which the sun setting behind me makes the village windows blaze ; and so I take out my oars, and pull leisurely through waters faintly flushed with evening colours.

I do not think that Mr. Buckle could have written his ' History of Civilisation ' in Dreamthorp, because in it books, conversation, and the other appurtenances of intellectual life, are not to be procured. I am acquainted with birds, and the building of nests—with wild-flowers, and the seasons in which they blow—but with the big world far away, with what men and women are thinking, and doing, and saying, I am acquainted only through the *Times*, and the occasional magazine or review, sent by friends whom I have not looked upon for years, but by whom, it seems, I am not yet forgotten. The village has but few intellectual wants, and the intellectual supply is strictly measured by the demand. Still there is something. Down in the village, and opposite the curiously-carved fountain, is a schoolroom which can accommodate a couple of hundred people on a pinch. There are our public meetings held. Musical entertainments have been given there by a single performer. In that schoolroom last winter an American

biologist terrified the villagers, and, to their simple understandings, mingled up the next world with this. Now and again some rare bird of an itinerant lecturer covers dead walls with posters, yellow and blue, and to that schoolroom we flock to hear him. His rounded periods the eloquent gentleman devotes amidst a respectful silence. His audience do not understand him, but they see that the clergyman does, and the doctor does; and so they are content, and look as attentive and wise as possible. Then in connexion with the schoolroom, there is a public library, where books are exchanged once a month. This library is a kind of Greenwich Hospital for disabled novels and romances. Each of these books has been in the wars; some are unquestionable antiques. The tears of three generations have fallen upon their dusky pages. The heroes and heroines are of another age than ours. Sir Charles Grandison is standing with his hat under his arm. Tom Jones plops from the tree into the water, to the infinite distress of Sophia. Moses comes home from market with his stock of shagreen spectacles. Lovers, warriors, and villains—as dead to the present generation of readers as Cambyses—are weeping, fighting, and intriguing. These books, tattered and torn as they are, are read with delight to-day. The viands are celestial if set forth on a dingy tablecloth. The gaps and chasms which occur in pathetic or perilous chapters are felt to be personal calamities. It is with a certain feeling of tenderness that I look upon these books; I think of the dead fingers that have turned over the leaves, of the dead eyes that have travelled along the lines. An old novel has a history of its own. When fresh and new, and before it had breathed its secret, it lay on my lady's table.

She killed the weary day with it, and when night came it was placed beneath her pillow. At the seaside a couple of foolish heads have bent over it, hands have touched and tingled, and it has heard vows and protestations as passionate as any its pages contained. Coming down in the world, Cinderella in the kitchen has blubbered over it by the light of a surreptitious candle, conceiving herself the while the magnificent Georgiana, and Lord Mordaunt, Georgiana's lover, the pot-boy round the corner. Tied up with many a dingy brother, the auctioneer knocks the bundle down to the bidder of a few pence, and it finds its way to the quiet cove of some village library, where with some difficulty—as if from want of teeth, and with numerous interruptions—as if from lack of memory, it tells its old stories, and wakes tears, and blushes, and laughter as of yore. Thus it spends its age, and in a few years it will become unintelligible, and then, in the dust-bin, like poor human mortals in the grave, it will rest from all its labours. It is impossible to estimate the benefit which such books have conferred. How often have they loosed the chain of circumstance! What unfamiliar tears—what unfamiliar laughter they have caused! What chivalry and tenderness they have infused into rustic loves! Of what weary hours they have cheated and beguiled their readers! The big, solemn history-books are in excellent preservation; the story-books are defaced and frayed, and their out-of-elbows condition is their pride, and the best justification of their existence. They are tashed, as roses are, by being eagerly handled and smelt. I observe, too, that the most ancient romances are not in every case the most severely worn. It is the pace that tells in horses, men, and books. There are

Nestors wonderfully hale ; there are juveniles in a state of dilapidation. One of the youngest books, ' The Old Curiosity Shop,' is absolutely falling to pieces. That book, like Italy, is possessor of the fatal gift ; but happily, in its case, everything can be rectified by a new edition. We have buried warriors and poets, princes and queens, but no one of these was followed to the grave by sincerer mourners than was little Nell.

Besides the itinerant lecturer, and the permanent library, we have the Sunday sermon. These sum up the intellectual aids and furtherances of the whole place. We have a church and a chapel, and I attend both. The Dreamthorp people are Dissenters, for the most part ; why, I never could understand ; because dissent implies a certain intellectual effort. But Dissenters they are, and Dissenters they are likely to remain. In an ungainly building, filled with hard gaunt pews, without an organ, without a touch of colour in the windows, with nothing to stir the imagination or the devotional sense, the simple people worship. On Sunday, they are put upon a diet of spiritual bread-and-water. Personally, I should desire more generous food. But the labouring people listen attentively, till once they fall asleep, and they wake up to receive the benediction with a feeling of having done their duty. They know they ought to go to chapel, and they go. I go likewise, from habit, although I have long ago lost the power of following a discourse. In my pew, and whilst the clergyman is going on, I think of the strangest things—of the tree at the window, of the congregation of the dead outside, of the wheat-fields and the corn-fields beyond and all around. And the odd thing is, that it is during sermon only that my mind flies off at a

tangent and busies itself with things removed from the place and the circumstances. Whenever it is finished fancy returns from her wanderings, and I am alive to the objects around me. The clergyman knows my humour, and is good Christian enough to forgive me; and he smiles good-humouredly when I ask him to let me have the chapel keys, that I may enter, when in the mood, and preach a sermon to myself. To my mind, an empty chapel is impressive; a crowded one, comparatively a commonplace affair. Alone, I could choose my own text, and my silent discourse would not be without its practical applications.

An idle life I live in this place, as the world counts it; but then I have the satisfaction of differing from the world as to the meaning of idleness. A windmill twirling its arms all day is admirable only when there is corn to grind. Twirling its arms for the mere barren pleasure of twirling them, or for the sake of looking busy, does not deserve any rapturous pæan of praise. I must be made happy after my own fashion, not after the fashion of other people. Here I can live as I please, here I can throw the reins on the neck of my whim. Here I play with my own thoughts; here I ripen for the grave.

Anatole France (born 1844)

OUR LADY'S JUGGLER *

In the days of King Louis there was a poor juggler in France, a native of Compiègne, Barnaby by name, who went about from town to town performing feats of skill and strength.

On fair days he would unfold an old worn-out carpet in the public square, and when by means of a jovial address, which he had learned of a very ancient juggler, and which he never varied in the least, he had drawn together the children and loafers, he assumed extraordinary attitudes, and balanced a tin plate on the tip of his nose. At first the crowd would feign indifference.

But when, supporting himself on his hands face downwards, he threw into the air six copper balls, which glittered in the sunshine, and caught them again with his feet; or when throwing himself backwards until his heels and the nape of the neck met, giving his body the form of a perfect wheel, he would juggle in this posture with a dozen knives, a murmur of admiration would escape the spectators, and pieces of money rain down upon the carpet.

Nevertheless, like the majority of those who live by their wits, Barnaby of Compiègne had a great struggle to make a living.

* From *Mother of Pearl*, translated by Frederick Chapman, by kind permission of the publisher, Mr. John Lane, London.

Earning his bread in the sweat of his brow, he bore rather more than his share of the penalties consequent upon the misdoings of our father Adam.

Again, he was unable to work as constantly as he would have been willing to do. The warmth of the sun and the broad daylight were as necessary to enable him to display his brilliant parts as to the trees if flower and fruit should be expected of them. In winter time he was nothing more than a tree stripped of its leaves, and as it were dead. The frozen ground was hard to the juggler, and, like the grasshopper of which Marie de France tells us, the inclement season caused him to suffer both cold and hunger. But as he was simple-natured he bore his ills patiently.

He had never meditated on the origin of wealth, nor upon the inequality of human conditions. He believed firmly that if this life should prove hard, the life to come could not fail to redress the balance, and this hope upheld him. He did not resemble those thievish and miscreant Merry Andrews who sell their souls to the devil. He never blasphemed God's name; he lived uprightly, and although he had no wife of his own, he did not covet his neighbour's, since woman is ever the enemy of the strong man, as it appears by the history of Samson recorded in the Scriptures.

In truth, his was not a nature much disposed to carnal delights, and it was a greater deprivation to him to forsake the tankard than the Hebe who bore it. For whilst not wanting in sobriety, he was fond of a drink when the weather waxed hot. He was a worthy man who feared God, and was very devoted to the Blessed Virgin.

Never did he fail on entering a church to fall upon his knees before the image of the Mother of God, and offer up this prayer to her :

“ Blessed Lady, keep watch over my life until it shall please God that I die, and when I am dead, ensure to me the possession of the joys of paradise.”

II

Now on a certain evening after a dreary wet day, as Barnaby pursued his road, sad and bent, carrying under his arm his balls and knives wrapped up in his old carpet, on the watch for some barn where, though he might not sup, he might sleep, he perceived on the road, going in the same direction as himself, a monk, whom he saluted courteously. And as they walked at the same rate they fell into conversation with one another.

“ Fellow traveller,” said the monk, “ how comes it about that you are clothed all in green? Is it perhaps in order to take the part of a jester in some mystery play?”

“ Not at all, good father,” replied Barnaby. “ Such as you see me, I am called Barnaby, and for my calling I am a juggler. There would be no pleasanter calling in the world if it would always provide one with daily bread.”

“ Friend Barnaby,” returned the monk, “ be careful what you say. There is no calling more pleasant than the monastic life. Those who lead it are occupied with the praises of God, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints; and, indeed, religious life is one ceaseless hymn to the Lord.”

Barnaby replied—

“ Good father, I own that I spoke like an ignorant man. Your calling cannot be in any respect compared to mine, and although there may be some merit in dancing with a penny balanced on a stick on the tip of one’s nose, it is not a merit which comes within hail of your own. Gladly would I, like you, good father, sing my office day by day, and especially the office of the most Holy Virgin, to whom I have vowed a singular devotion. In order to embrace the monastic life I would willingly abandon the art by which from Soissons to Beauvais I am well known in upwards of six hundred towns and villages.”

The monk was touched by the juggler’s simplicity, and as he was not lacking in discernment, he at once recognised in Barnaby one of those men of whom it is said in the Scriptures: Peace on earth to men of good will. And for this reason he replied—

“ Friend Barnaby, come with me, and I will have you admitted into the monastery of which I am Prior. He who guided St. Mary of Egypt in the desert set me upon your path to lead you into the way of salvation.”

It was in this manner, then, that Barnaby became a monk. In the monastery into which he was received the religious vied with one another in the worship of the Blessed Virgin, and in her honour each employed all the knowledge and all the skill which God had given him.

The prior on his part wrote books dealing according to the rules of scholarship with the virtues of the Mother of God.

Brother Maurice, with a deft hand copied out these treatises upon sheets of vellum.

Brother Alexander adorned the leaves with delicate miniature paintings. Here were displayed the Queen of Heaven seated upon Solomon's throne, and while four lions were on guard at her feet, around the nimbus which encircled her head hovered seven doves, which are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, the gifts, namely, of Fear, Piety, Knowledge, Strength, Counsel, Understanding, and Wisdom. For her companions she had six virgins with hair of gold, namely, Humility, Prudence, Seclusion, Submission, Virginity, and Obedience.

At her feet were two little naked figures, perfectly white, in an attitude of supplication. These were souls imploring her all-powerful intercession for their soul's health, and we may be sure not imploring in vain.

Upon another page facing this, Brother Alexander represented Eve, so that the Fall and the Redemption could be perceived at one and the same time—Eve the Wife abased, and Mary the Virgin exalted.

Furthermore, to the marvel of the beholder, this book contained presentments of the Well of Living Waters, the Fountain, the Lily, the Moon, the Sun, and the Garden Enclosed of which the Song of Songs tells us, the Gate of Heaven and the City of God, and all these things were symbols of the Blessed Virgin.

Brother Marbode was likewise one of the most loving children of Mary.

He spent all his days carving images in stone, so that his beard, his eyebrows, and his hair were white with dust, and his eyes continually swollen and weeping; but his strength and cheerfulness were not diminished, although he was now well gone in

years, and it was clear that the Queen of Paradise still cherished her servant in his old age. Marbode represented her seated upon a throne, her brow encircled with an orb-shaped nimbus set with pearls. And he took care that the folds of her dress should cover the feet of her, concerning whom the prophet declared: My beloved is as a garden enclosed.

Sometimes, too, he depicted her in the semblance of a child full of grace, and appearing to say, "Thou art my God, even from my mother's womb."

In the priory, moreover, were poets who composed hymns in Latin, both in prose and verse, in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and amongst the company was even a brother from Picardy who sang the miracles of Our Lady in rhymed verse and in the vulgar tongue.

III

Being a witness of this emulation in praise and the glorious harvest of their labours, Barnaby mourned his own ignorance and simplicity.

"Alas!" he sighed, as he took his solitary walk in the little shelterless garden of the monastery, "wretched wight that I am, to be unable, like my brothers, worthily to praise the Holy Mother of God, to whom I have vowed my whole heart's affection. Alas! alas! I am but a rough man and unskilled in the arts and I can render you in service, blessed Lady, neither edifying sermons, nor treatises set out in order according to rule, nor ingenious paintings, nor statues truthfully sculptured, nor verses whose march is measured to the best of feet. No gift have I, alas!"

After this fashion he groaned and gave himself up to sorrow. But one evening, when the monks were spending their hour of liberty in conversation, he heard one of them tell the tale of a religious man who could repeat nothing other than the Ave Maria. This poor man was despised for his ignorance; but after his death there issued forth from his mouth five roses in honour of the five letters of the name Mary (Marie), and thus his sanctity was made manifest.

Whilst he listened to this narrative Barnaby marvelled yet once again at the loving kindness of the Virgin; but the lesson of that blessed death did not avail to console him, for his heart overflowed with zeal, and he longed to advance the glory of his Lady, who is in heaven.

How to compass this he sought but could find no way, and day by day he became the more cast down, when one morning he awakened filled full with joy, hastened to the chapel, and remained there alone for more than an hour. After dinner he returned to the chapel once more.

And, starting from that moment, he repaired daily to the chapel at such hours as it was deserted, and spent within it a good part of the time which the other monks devoted to the liberal and mechanical arts. His sadness vanished, nor did he any longer groan.

A demeanour so strange awakened the curiosity of the monks.

These began to ask one another for what purpose Brother Barnaby could be indulging so persistently in retreat.

The prior, whose duty it is to let nothing escape him in the behaviour of his children in religion,

resolved to keep a watch over Barnaby during his withdrawals to the chapel. One day, then, when he was shut up there after his custom, the prior, accompanied by two of the older monks, went to discover through the chinks in the door what was going on within the chapel.

They saw Barnaby before the altar of the Blessed Virgin, head downwards with his feet in the air, and he was juggling with six balls of copper and a dozen knives. In honour of the Holy Mother of God he was performing those feats, which aforetime had won him most renown. Not recognising that the simple fellow was thus placing at the service of the Blessed Virgin his knowledge and skill, the two old monks exclaimed the sacrilege.

The prior was aware how stainless was Barnaby's soul, but he concluded that he had been seized with madness. They were all three preparing to lead him swiftly from the chapel, when they saw the Blessed Virgin descend the steps of the altar and advance to wipe away with a fold of her azure robe the sweat which was dropping from her juggler's forehead.

Then the prior, falling upon his face upon the pavement, uttered these words—

“Blessed are the simple-hearted, for they shall see God.”

“Amen!” responded the old brethren and kissed the ground.

James Lane Allen (born 1849)

**POSTHUMOUS FAME; OR, A LEGEND OF
THE BEAUTIFUL ***

I

There once lived in a great city, where the dead were all but innumerable, a young man by the name of Nicholas Vane, who possessed a singular genius for the making of tombstones. So beautiful they were, and so fitly designed to express the shadowy pain of mortal memory or the bright forecasting of eternal hope, that all persons were held fortunate who could secure them for the calm resting-places of their beloved sleepers. Indeed, the curious tale was whispered round that the bereft were not his only patrons, but that certain personages who were peculiarly ambitious of posthumous fame—seeing they had not long to live, and unwilling to intrust others with the grave responsibility of having them commemorated—had gone to his shop and secretly advised with him respecting such monuments as might preserve their memories from too swift oblivion.

However this may fall out, certain it is that his calling had its secrets; and once he was known to observe that no man could ever understand the human heart until he had become a maker of tombstones.

* From *Flute and Violin and other Kentucky Tales*, by kind permission of the author and the publishers, Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., of New York, U. S. A.

Whether the knowledge thus derived should make of one a laughing or a weeping philosopher, Nicholas himself remained a joyous type of youthful manhood—so joyous, in fact, that a friend of his who wrought in colour, strolling one day into the workshop where Nicholas stood surrounded by the exquisite shapes of memorial marbles, had asked to paint the scene as a representation of Life chiselling to its beautiful purposes the rugged symbols of Death, and smiling as it wove the words of love and faith across the stony proofs of the universal tragedy. Afterwards, it is true, a great change was wrought in the young artisan.

He had just come in one morning and paused to look around at the various finished and unfinished mortuary designs.

“Truly,” he said to himself all at once, “if I were a wise man, I’d begin this day’s business by chiselling my own head-stone. For who knows but that before sunset my brother the grave-digger may be told to build me one of the houses that last till doomsday! And what man could then make the monument to stop the door of *my* house with? But why should I have a monument? If I lie beneath it, I shall not know I lie there. If I lie not there, then it will not stand over me. So, whether I lie there, or lie not there, what will it matter to me then? Aye; but what if, being dead only to this world and living in another, I should yet look on the monument erected to my memory and therefore be the happier? I know not; nor to what end we are vexed with this desire to be remembered after death. The prospect of vanishing from a poor, toilsome life fills us with such consternation and pain! It is therefore we

strive to impress ourselves ineffaceably on the race, so that, after we have gone hence, or ceased to be, we may still have incorporeal habitation among all coming generation."

Here he was interrupted by a low knock at the door. Bidden to come in, there entered a man of delicate physiognomy, who threw a hurried glance around and inquired in an anxious tone:

"Sir, are you alone?"

"I am never alone," replied Nicholas in a ringing voice; "for I dwell hard by the gate-way of life and death, through which a multitude is always passing."

"Not so loud, I beseech you," said the visitor, stretching forth his thin, white hands with eager deprecation. "I would not, for the world, have any one discover that I have been here."

"Are you, then, a personage of such importance to the world?" said Nicholas, smiling, for the stranger's appearance argued no worldly consideration whatsoever. The suit of black, which his frail figure seemed to shrink away from with very sensitiveness, was glossy and pathetic with more than one convert patch. His shoes were dust-covered and worn. His long hair went round his head in a swirl, and he bore himself with an air of damaged, apologetic, self-appreciation.

"I am a poet," he murmured with a flush of pain, dropping his large mournful eyes beneath the scrutiny of one who might be an unsympathetic listener. "I am a poet, and I have come to speak with you privately of my—of the—of a monument. I am afraid I shall be forgotten. It is a terrible thought."

“ Can you not trust your poems to keep you remembered?” asked Nicholas, with more kindliness.

“ I could if they were as widely read as they should be.” He appeared emboldened by his hearer’s gentleness. “ But, to confess the truth, I have not been accepted by my age. That, indeed, should give me no pain, since I have not written for it, but for the great future to which alone I look for my fame.”

“ Then why not look to it for your monument also?”

“ Ah, sir!” he cried, “ there are so many poets in the world that I might be entirely overlooked by posterity, did there not descend to it some sign that I was held in honour by my own generation.”

“ Have you never noticed,” he continued, with more earnestness, “ that when strangers visit a cemetery they pay no attention to the thousands of little head-stones that lie scattered close to the ground, but hunt out the highest monuments, to learn in whose honour they were erected? Have you never heard them exclaim: ‘ Yonder is a great monument! A great man must be buried there. Let us go and find out who he was and what he did to be so celebrated.’ Oh, sir, you and I know that this is a poor way of reasoning, since the greatest monuments are not always set over the greatest men. Still the custom has wrought its good effects, and splendid memorials do serve to make known in years to come those whom they commemorate, by inciting posterity to search for their actions or revive their thoughts. I warrant you the mere bust of Homer—”

“ You are not mentioning yourself in the same breath with Homer, I hope,” said Nicholas, with great good-humour.

“ My poems are as dear to me as Homer’s were to him,” replied the poet, his eyes filling.

“ What if you *are* forgotten? Is it not enough for the poet to have lived for the sake of beauty?”

“ No!” he cried, passionately. “ What you say is a miserable error. For the very proof of the poet’s vocation is in creating the beautiful. But how know he has created it? By his own mind? Alas, the poet’s mind tells him only what is beautiful to *him*! It is by fame that he knows it—fame, the gratitude of men for the beauty he has revealed to them! What is so sweet, then, as the knowledge that fame has come to him already, or surely awaits him after he is dead?”

“ We labour under some confusion of ideas, I fear,” said Nicholas, “ and, besides, are losing time. What kind of men—”

“ That I leave to you,” interrupted the poet. “ Only, I should like my monument to be beautiful. Ah, if you but knew how all through this poor life of mine I have loved the beautiful! Never, never have I drawn near it in any visible form without almost holding my breath as though I were looking deep, deep into God’s opened eyes. But it was of the epitaph I wished to speak ”

Hereupon, with a deeper flush, he drew from a large inside breast-pocket, that seemed to have been made for the purpose, a worn duodecimo volume, and fell to turning the much-fingered pages.

“ This,” he murmured fondly, without looking up, “ is the complete collection of my poems.”

“ Indeed!” exclaimed Nicholas, with deep compassion.

" Yes, my complete collection. I have written a great deal more, and should have liked to publish all that I have written. But it was necessary to select, and I have included here only what it was intolerable to see wasted. There is nothing I value more than a group of elegiac poems, which every single member of my large family—who are fine critics—and all my friends, pronounce very beautiful. I think it would be a good idea to inscribe a selection from one on my monument, since those who read the selection would wish to read the entire poem, and those who read the entire poem, would wish to read the entire collection. I shall now favour you with these elegies."

" I should be happy to hear them; but my time!" said Nicholas, courteously. " The living are too impatient to wait on me; the dead too patient to be defrauded."

" Surely you would not refuse to hear one of them," exclaimed the poet, his eyes flashing.

" Read *one*, by all means." Nicholas seated himself on a monumental lamb.

The poet passed one hand gently across his forehead, as though to brush away the stroke of rudeness; then, fixing upon Nicholas a look of infinite remoteness, he read as follows:

" He suffered but he murmured not;
To every storm he bared his breast;
He asked but for the highest lot:
To be a bard above the rest."

" If you ask but for the common lot," interrupted Nicholas, " you should rest content to be forgotten."

But before the poet could reply, a loud knock caused him to flap the leaves of the " Complete

Collection " together with one hand, while with the other he gathered the tails of his long coat about him, as though preparing to pass through some difficult aperture. The exaltation of his mood, however, still showed itself in the look and tone of proud condescension with which he said to Nicholas :

" Permit me to retire at once by some private passway."

Nicholas led him to a door in the rear of the shop, and there, with a smile and a tear, stood for a moment watching the precipitate figure of the retreating bard, who suddenly paused when disappearing and tore open the breast of his coat to assure himself that his beloved elegies were resting safe across his heart.

The second visitor was of another sort. He hobbled on a cork leg, but inexorably disciplined the fleshy one into old-time firmness and precision. A faded military cloak draped his stalwart figure. Part of one bushy gray eyebrow had been chipped away by the same sword-cut that left its scar across his battle-beaten face.

" I have come to speak with you about my monument," he said in a gruff voice that seemed to issue from the mouth of a rusty cannon. " Those of my old comrades that did not fall at my side are dead. My wife died long ago, and my little children. I am old and forgotten. It is a time of peace. There's not a boy who will now listen to me while I tell of my campaigns. I live alone. Were I to die to-morrow my grave might not have so much as a headstone. It might be taken for that of a coward. Make me a monument of a true soldier."

" Your grateful country will do that," said Nicholas.

“ Ha?” exclaimed the veteran, whom the shock of battle had made deaf long ago.

“ Your country,” shouted Nicholas, close to his ear, “ your country—will erect a monument—to your memory.”

“ My country!” The words were shot out with a reverberating, melancholy boom. “ My country will do no such a thing. How many millions of soldiers have fallen on her battle-fields! Where are their monuments? They would make her one vast cemetery.”

“ But is it not enough for you to have been a true soldier? Why wish to be known and remembered for it?”

“ I know I do not wish to be forgotten,” he replied, simply. “ I know I take pleasure in the thought that long after I am forgotten there will be a tongue in my monument to cry out to every passing stranger, ‘ Here lies the body of a true soldier.’ It is a great thing to be brave!”

“ Is, then, this monument to be erected in honour of bravery, or of yourself?”

“ There is no difference,” said the veteran, bluntly. “ Bravery is myself.”

“ It is bravery,” he continued, in husky tones, and with a mist gathering in his eyes that made him wink as though he were trying to see through the smoke of battle—“ it is bravery that I see most clearly in the character of God. What would become of us if he were a coward? I serve him as my brave commander; and though I am stationed far from him and may be faint and sorely wounded, I know that he is somewhere on the battle-field, and that I shall

see him at last, approaching me as he moves up and down among the ranks."

"But you say that your country does not notice you—that you have no friends; do you, then, feel no resentment?"

"None, none," he answered quickly, though his head dropped on his bosom.

"And you wish to be remembered by a world that is willing to forget you?"

He lifted his head proudly. "There are many true men in the world," he said, "and it has much to think of. I owe it all I can give, all I can bequeath; and I can bequeath it nothing but the memory of a true man."

One day, not long after this, there came into the workshop of Nicholas a venerable man of the gravest, sweetest, and most scholarly aspect, who spoke not a word until he had led Nicholas to the front window and pointed a trembling finger at a distant churchspire.

"You see yon spire?" he said. "It almost pierces the clouds. In the church beneath I have preached to men and women for nearly fifty years. Many that I have christened at the font I have married at the altar; many of these I have sprinkled with dust. What have I not done for them in sorrow and want! How have I not toiled to set them in the way of purer pleasures and to anchor their tempest-tossed hopes! And yet how soon they will forget me! Already many say I am too old to preach. Too old! I preach better than I ever did in my life. Yet it may be my lot to wander down into the deep valley, an idle shepherd with an idle crook. I have just come from the writing of my next sermon, in which I

exhort my people to strive that their names be not written on earthly monuments or human hearts, but in the Book of Life. It is my sublimest theme. If I am ever eloquent, if I am ever persuasive, if I ever for one moment draw aside to spiritual eyes the veil that discloses the calm, enrapturing vistas of eternity, it is when I measure my finite strength against this mighty task. But why? Because they are the sermons of my own aspiration. I preach them to my own soul. Face to face with that naked soul I pen those sermons—pen them when all are asleep save the sleepless Eye that is upon me. Even in the light of that Eye do I recoil from the thought of being forgotten. How clearly I foresee it! Ashes to ashes, dust to dust! Where then will be my doctrines, my prayers, my sermons?"

"Is it not enough for you to have scattered your handful of good broadcast, to ripen as endlessly as the grass? What if they that gather know naught of him that sowed?"

"It is not enough. I should like the memory of me to live on and on in the world, inseparable from the good I may have done. What am I but the good that is in me? 'Tis this that links me to the infinite and the perfect. Does not the Perfect One wish his goodness to be associated with his name? No! No! I do not wish to be forgotten!"

"It is mere vanity."

"Not vanity," said the aged servitor, meekly. "Wait until you are old, till the grave is at your helpless feet: it is the love of life."

But some years later there befell Nicholas an event that transcended all past experiences, and left its impress on his whole subsequent life.

II

The hour had passed when any one was likely to enter his shop. A few rays of pale sunlight, straggling in through crevices of the door, rested like a dying halo on the heads of the monumental figures grouped around. Shadows, creeping upward from the ground, shrouded all else in thin, penetrable half-gloom, through which the stark gray emblems of mortality sent forth more solemn suggestions. A sudden sense of the earthly tragedy overwhelmed him. The chisel and the hammer dropped from his hands and, resting his head on the block he had been carving, he gave himself up to that mood of dim, distant reverie in which the soul seems to soar and float far above the shock and din of the world's disturbing nearness. On his all but oblivious ear, like the faint washings of some remote sea, beat the waves of the city's tide-driven life in the streets outside. The room itself seemed hushed to the awful stillness of the high aerial spaces. Then all at once this stillness was broken by a voice, low, clear, and tremulous, saying close to his ear ;

“ Are you the maker of gravestones ? ”

“ That is my sad calling,” he cried, bitterly, starting up with instinctive forebodings.

He saw before him a veiled figure. To support herself, she rested one hand on the block he had been carving, while she pressed the other against her heart, as though to stifle pain.

“ Whose monument is this ? ”

“ A neglected poet's who died not long ago. Soon, perhaps, I shall be making one for an old soldier,

and one for a holy man, whose soul, I hear, is about to be dismissed."

"Are not some monuments sadder to make than others?"

"Aye, truly."

"What is the saddest you ever made?"

"The saddest monument I ever made was one for a poor mother who had lost her only son. One day a woman came in who had no sooner entered than she sat down and gave way to a passionate outburst of grief."

"My good woman," I said, "why do you weep so bitterly?"

"Do not call me good," she moaned, and hid her face.

"I then perceived her fallen character. When she recovered self-control she drew from her sinful bosom an old purse filled with coins of different values.

"Why do you give me this?" I asked.

"It is to pay for a monument for my son," she said, and the storm of her grief swept over her again.

"I learned that for years she had toiled and starved to hoard up a sum with which to build a monument to his memory, for he had never failed of his duty to her after all others had cast her out. Certainly he had his reward, not in the monument, but in the repentance which came to her after his death. I have never seen such sorrow for evil as the memory of his love wrought in her. For herself she desired only that the spot where she should be buried might be unknown. This longing to be forgotten has led me to believe that none desire to be remembered for the evil that is in them, but only for some truth, or beauty, or goodness by which they have linked

their individual lives to the general life of the race. Even the lying epitaphs in cemeteries prove how we would fain have the dead arrayed on the side of right in the thoughts of their survivors. This wretched mother and human outcast, believing herself to have lost everything that makes it well to be remembered, craved only the mercy of forgetfulness."

"And yet I think she died a Christian soul."

"You knew her, then?"

"I was with her in her last hours. She told me her story. She told me also of you, and that you would accept nothing for the monument you were at such care to make. It is perhaps for this reason that I have felt some desire to see you, and that I am here now to speak with you of—"

A shudder passed over her.

"After all, that was not a sad, but a joyous monument to fashion," she added, abruptly.

"Aye, it was joyous. But to me the joyous and the sad are much allied in the things of this life."

"And yet there might be one monument wholly sad, might there not?"

"There might be, but I know not whose it would be."

"If she you love should die, would not hers be so?"

"Until I love, and she I love is dead, I cannot know," said Nicholas, smiling.

"What builds the most monuments?" she asked, quickly, as though to retreat from her levity.

"Pride builds many—splendid ones. Gratitude builds some, forgiveness some and pity some. But

faith builds more than these, though often poor, humble ones; and love!—love builds more than all things else together.”

“ And what, of all things that monuments are built in memory of, is most loved and soonest forgotten?” she asked, with intensity.

“ Nay, I cannot tell that.”

“ Is it not a beautiful woman? This, you say, is the monument of a poet. After the poet grows old, men love him for the songs he sang; they love the old soldier for the battles he fought, and the preacher for his remembered prayers. But a woman! Who loves her for the beauty she once possessed, or rather regards her not with the more distaste? Is there in history a figure so lonely and despised as that of the woman who, once the most beautiful in the world, crept back into her native land a withered hag? Or, if a woman die while she is yet beautiful, how long is she remembered? Her beauty is like heat and light—powerful only for those who feel and see it.”

But Nicholas had scarcely heard her. His eyes had become riveted upon her hand, which nested on the marble, as white as though grown out of it under the labours of his chisel.

“ My lady,” he said, with the deepest respect, “ will you permit me to look at your hand? I have carved many a one in marble, and studied many a one in life; but never have I seen anything so beautiful as yours.”

He took it with an artist's impetuosity and bent over it, laying its palm against one of his own and stroking it softly with the other. The blood leaped through his heart, and he suddenly lifted it to his lips

"God only can make the hand beautiful," he said.

Displaced by her arm which he had upraised, the light fabric that had concealed her figure parted on her bosom and slipped to the ground. His eyes swept over the perfect shape that stood revealed. The veil still concealed her face. The strangely mingled emotions that had been deepening within him all this time now blended themselves in one irrepressible wish.

"Will you permit me to see your face?"

She drew quickly back. A subtle pain was in his voice as he cried:

"Oh, my lady! I ask it as one who has pure eyes for the beautiful."

"My face belongs to my past. It has been my sorrow; it is nothing now."

"Only permit me to see it!"

"Is there no other face you would rather see?"

Who can fathom the motive of a woman's questions?

"None, none!"

She drew aside her veil, and her eyes rested quietly on his like a revelation. So young she was as hardly yet to be a woman, and her beauty had in it that seraphic purity and mysterious pathos which is never seen in a woman's face until the touch of another world has chastened her spirit into the resignation of a saint. The heart of Nicholas was wrung by the sight of it with a sudden sense of inconsolable loss and longing.

"Oh, my lady!" he cried, sinking on one knee and touching his lips to her hand with greater gentleness. "Do you indeed think the beauty of a woman

so soon forgotten? As long as I live, yours will be as fresh in my memory as it was the moment after I first saw it in its perfection and felt its power."

"Do not recall to me the sorrow of such thoughts." She touched her heart. "My heart is a tired hour-glass. Already the sands are well nigh run through. Any hour it may stop, and then—out like a light! Shapeless ashes! I have loved life well, but not so well that I have not been able to prepare to leave it."

She spoke with the utmost simplicity and calmness, yet her eyes were turned with unspeakable sadness towards the shadowy recesses of the room, where from their pedestals the monumental figures looked down upon her as though they would have opened their marble lips and said, "Poor child! Poor child!"

"I have had my wish to see you and to see this place. Before long some one will come here to have you carve a monument to the most perishable of all things. Like the poor mother who had no wish to be remembered—"

Nicholas was moved to the deepest.

"I have but little skill," he said. "The great God did not bestow on me the genius of his favourite children of sculpture. But if so sad and sacred a charge should ever become mine, with his help I will rear such a monument to your memory that as long as it stands none who see it will ever be able to forget you. Year after year your memory shall grow as a legend of the beautiful.

When she was gone he sat self-forgetful until the darkness grew impenetrable. As he groped his way out at last along the thick guide-posts of death, her

voice seemed to float towards him from every head-stone, her name to be written in every epitaph.

The next day a shadow brooded over the place. Day by day it deepened. He went out to seek intelligence of her. In the quarter of the city where she lived he discovered that her name had already become a nucleus around which were beginning to cluster many little legends of the beautiful. He had but to hear recitals of her deeds of kindness and mercy. For the chance of seeing her again he began to haunt the neighbourhood; then, having seen her, he would return to his shop the victim of more unavailing desire. All things combined to awake in him that passion of love whose roots are nourished in the soul's finest soil of pity and hopelessness. Once or twice, under some pretext, he made bold to accost her; and once, under the stress of his passion, he mutely lifted his eyes, confessing his love; but hers were turned aside.

Meantime he began to dream of the monument he chose to consider she had committed to his making. It should be the triumph of his art; but more, it would represent in stone the indissoluble union of his love with her memory. Through him alone would she enter upon her long after-life of saint-like reminiscence.

When the tidings of her death came, he soon sprang up from the prostration of his grief with a burning desire to consummate his beloved work.

"Year after year your memory shall grow as a legend of the beautiful."

These words now became the inspiration of his masterpiece. Day and night it took shape in the

rolling chaos of his sorrow. What sculptor in the world ever espoused the execution of a work that lured more irresistibly from their hiding-places the shy and tender ministers of his genius? What one ever explored with greater boldness the utmost limits of artistic expression, or wrought in sterner defiance of the laws of our common forgetfulness?

III

One afternoon, when people thronged the great cemetery of the city, a strolling group were held fascinated by the unique loveliness of a newly erected monument.

"Never," they exclaimed, "have we seen so exquisite a masterpiece. In whose honour is it erected?"

But when they drew nearer, they found carved on it simply a woman's name.

"Who was she?" they asked, puzzled and disappointed. "Is there no epitaph?"

"Aye," spoke up a young man lying on the grass and eagerly watching the spectators. "Aye, a very fitting epitaph."

"Where is it?"

"Carved on the heart of the monument!" he cried, in a tone of triumph.

"On the heart of the monument? Then we cannot see it."

"It is not meant to be seen."

"How do *you* know of it?"

"I made the monument."

"Then tell us what it is."

"It cannot be told. It is there only because it is unknown."

"Out on you! You play your pranks with the living and the dead."

"You will live to regret this day," said a thoughtful by-stander. "You have tampered with the memory of the dead."

"Why, look you, good people," cried Nicholas, springing up and approaching his beautiful master-work. He rested one hand lovingly against it and glanced around him pale with repressed excitement, as though a long-looked-for moment had at length arrived. "I play no pranks with the living or the dead. Young as I am, I have fashioned many monuments, as this cemetery will testify. But I make no more. This is my last; and as it is the last, so it is the greatest. For I have fashioned it in such love and sorrow for her who lies beneath it as you can never know. If it is beautiful, it is yet an unworthy emblem of that brief and transporting beauty which was hers; and I have planted it here beside her grave, that as a delicate white flower it may exhale the perfume of her memory for centuries to come.

"Tell me," he went on, his lips trembling, his voice faltering with the burden of oppressive hope—"tell me, you who behold it now, do you not wed her memory deathlessly to it? To its fair shape, its native and unchanging purity?"

"Aye," they interrupted, impatiently. "But the epitaph?"

"Ah!" he cried, with tenderer feeling, "beautiful as the monument is to the eye, it would be not fit emblem of her had it not something sacred hidden

within. For she was not lovely to the sense alone, but had a perfect heart. So I have placed within the monument that which is its heart and typifies hers. And, mark you!" he cried, in a voice of such awful warning that those standing nearest him instinctively shrank back, "the one is as inviolable as the other. No more could you rend the heart from the human bosom than this epitaph from the monument. My deep and lasting curse on him who attempts it! For I have so fitted the parts of the work together, that to disunite would be to break them in pieces; and the inscription is so fragile and delicately poised within, that so much as rudely to jar the monument would shiver it to atoms. It is put there to be inviolable. Seek to know it, you destroy it. This I but create after the plan of the Great Artist, who shows you only the fair outside of his masterpieces. What human eye ever looked into the mysterious heart of his beautiful—that heart which holds the secret of inexhaustible freshness and eternal power? Could this epitaph have been carved on the outside, you would have read it and forgotten it with natural satiety. But uncomprehended, what a spell I mark it exercises! You will—nay, you *must*—remember it for ever! You will speak of it to others. They will come. And thus in ever-widening circle will be borne afar the memory of her whose name is on it, the emblem of whose heart is hidden within. And what more fitting memorial could a man rear to a woman, the pure shell of whose beauty all can see, the secret of whose beautiful being no one ever comprehends?"

He walked rapidly away, then, some distance off, turned and looked back. More spectators had come

up. Some were earnestly talking, pointing now to the monument, now towards him. Others stood in rapt contemplation of his master-work.

Tears rose to his eyes. A look of ineffable joy overspread his face.

“ Oh, my love ! ” he murmured, “ I have triumphed. Death has claimed your body, heaven your spirit ; but the earth claims the saintly memory of each. This day about your name begins to grow the Legend of the Beautiful. ”

The sun had just set. The ethereal white shape of the monument stood outlined against a soft background of rose-coloured sky. To his transfiguring imagination it seemed lifted far into the cloud-based heavens, and the evening star, resting above its apex, was a celestial lamp lowered to guide the eye to it through the darkness of the descending night.

IV

Mysterious complexity of our mortal nature and estate that we should so desire to be remembered after death, though born to be forgotten ! Our words and deeds, the influences of our silent personalities, do indeed pass from us into the long history of the race and abide for the rest of time : so that an earthly immortality is the heritage, nay, the inalienable necessity, of even the commonest lives ; only it is an immortality not of self, but of its good and evil. For Nature sows us and reaps us, that she may gather a harvest, not of us, but from us. It is God alone that gathers the harvest of us. And well for us that our destiny should be that general forgetfulness we so strangely shrink from. For no sooner are we gone hence than, even for such brief times as our

memories may endure, we are apt to grow by processes of accumulative transformation into what we never were. Thou kind, kind fate, therefore—never enough named and celebrated—that biddest the sun of memory rise on our finished but imperfect lives, and then lengthenest or shortenest the little day of posthumous reminiscence, according as thou seest there is need of early twilight or of deeper shadows!

Years passed. City and cemetery were each grown vaster. It was again an afternoon when the people strolled among the graves and monuments. An old man had courteously attached himself to a group that stood around a crumbling memorial. He had reached a great age; but his figure was erect, his face animated by strong emotions, and his eyes burned beneath his brows.

“Sirs,” said he, interposing in the conversation, which turned wholly on the monument. “you say nothing of him in whose honour it was erected.”

“We say nothing because we know nothing.”

“Is he then wholly forgotten?”

“We are not aware that he is at all remembered.”

“The inscription reads: ‘He was a poet.’ Know you none of his poems?”

“We have never so much as heard of his poems.”

“My eyes are dim; is there nothing carved beneath his name?”

One of the by-standers went up and knelt down close to the base.

“There *was* something here, but it is effaced by time—Wait!” And tracing his finger slowly along, he read like a child:

“He—asked—but—for—the—highest—lot.”

"That is all," he cried, springing lightly up. "Oh, the dust on my knees!" he added with vexation.

"He may have sung very sweetly," pursues the old man.

"He may, indeed!" they answered, carelessly.

"But, sirs," continued he, with a sad smile, "perhaps you are the very generation that he looked to for the fame which his own denied him; perhaps he died believing that *you* would fully appreciate his poem."

"If so, it was a comfortable faith to die in," they said, laughing, in return. "He will never know that we did not. A few great poets have posthumous fame: we know *them* well enough." And they passed on.

"This," said the old man, as they paused elsewhere, "seems to be the monument of a true soldier: know you aught of the victories he helped to win?"

"He may not have helped to win any victories. He may have been a coward. How should *we* know?" Epitaphs often lie. The dust is peopled with soldiers." And again they moved on.

"Does any one read his sermons now, know you?" asked the old man as they paused before a third monument.

"Read his sermons!" they exclaimed, laughing more heartily. "Are sermons so much read in the country you come from? See how long he has been dead! What should the world be thinking of, to be reading his musty sermons?"

"At least does it give you no pleasure to read. He was a good man?" inquired he, plaintively.

"Aye; but if he was good, was not his goodness its own reward?"

"He may have also wished long to be remembered for it."

"Naturally; but we have not heard that his wish was gratified."

"Is it not sad that the memory of so much beauty and truth and goodness in our common human life should perish? But, sirs,"—and here the old man spoke with sudden energy—"if there should be one who combined perfect beauty and truth and goodness in one form and character, do you not think such a rare being would escape the common fate and be long and widely remembered?"

"Doubtless."

"Sirs," said he, quickly stepping in front of them with flashing eyes, "is there in all this vast cemetery not a single monument that has kept green the memory of the being in whose honour it was erected?"

"Aye, aye," they answered, readily. "Have you not heard of it?"

"I am but come from distant countries. Many years ago I was here, and have journeyed hither with much desire to see the place once more. Would you kindly show me this monument?"

"Come!" they answered, eagerly, starting off. "It is the best known of all the thousands in the cemetery. None who see it can ever forget it."

"Yes, yes!" murmured the old man. "That is why I have—I foresaw—Is it not a beautiful monument? Does it not lie—in what direction does it lie?"

A feverish eagerness seized him. He walked now beside, now before, his companions. Once he wheeled on them.

“Sirs, did you not say it perpetuates the memory of her—of the one—who lies beneath it?”

“Both are famous. The story of this woman and her monument will never be forgotten. It is impossible to forget it.”

“Year after year—” muttered he brushing his hand across his eyes.

They soon came to a spot where the aged branches of memorial evergreens interwove a sunless canopy, and spread far around a drapery of gloom through which the wind passed with an unending sigh. Brushing aside the lowest boughs, they stepped in awe-stricken silence within the dank, chill cone of shade. Before them rose the shape of a gray monument, at sight of which the aged traveller, who had fallen behind, dropped his staff and held out his arms as though he would have embraced it. But, controlling himself, he stepped forward, and said, in tones of thrilling sweetness:

“Sirs, you have not told me what story is connected with this monument that it should be so famous. I conceive it must be some very touching one of her whose name I read—some beautiful legend—”

“Judge you of that!” interrupted one of the group, with a voice of stern sadness and not without a certain look of mysterious horror. “They say this monument was reared to a woman by the man who once loved her. She was very beautiful, and so he made her a very beautiful monument. But she had a heart so hideous in its falsity that he carved in stone an enduring curse on her evil memory, and hung it in the heart of the monument because it was too awful for any eye to see. But others tell the story

differently. They say the woman not only had a heart false beyond description, but was in person the ugliest of her sex. So that while the hidden curse is a lasting execration of her nature, the beautiful exterior is a masterpiece of mockery which her nature, and not her ugliness, maddened his sensitive genius to perpetrate. There can be no doubt that this is the true story, as hundreds tell it now, and that the woman will be remembered so long as the monument stands—aye, and longer—not only for her loathsome—Help the old man!’

He had fallen backward to the ground. They tried in vain to set him on his feet. Stunned, speechless, he could only raise himself on one elbow and turn his eyes towards the monument with a look of preternatural horror, as though the lie had issued from its treacherous shape. At length he looked up to them, as they bent kindly over him, and spoke with much difficulty :

“Sirs, I am an old man—a very old man, and very feeble. Forgive this weakness. And I have come a long way, and must be faint. While you were speaking my strength failed me. You were telling me a story—were you not?—the story—the legend of a most beautiful woman, when all at once my senses grew confused and I failed to hear you rightly. Then my ears played me such a trick! Oh, sirs! if you but knew what a damnable trick my ears played me, you would pity me greatly, very, very greatly. This story touches me. It is much like one I seemed to have heard for many years, and that I have been repeating over and over to myself until I love it better than my life. If you would but go over it again—carefully—very carefully.”

“ My God, sirs ! ” he exclaimed, springing up with the energy of youth when he had heard the recital a second time, “ tell me *who* who started this story ! Tell me *how* and *where* it began ! ”

“ We cannot. We have heard many tell it, and not all alike. ”

“ And do they—do you—believe—it is—true ? ” he asked, helplessly.

“ We all *know* it is true ; do not *you* believe it ? ”

“ I can never forget it ! ” he said, in tones quickly grown harsh and husky. “ Let us go away from so pitiful a place. ”

It was near nightfall when he returned, unobserved, and sat down beside the monument as one who had ended a pilgrimage.

“ They all tell me the same story, ” he murmured, wearily. “ Ah, it was the hidden epitaph that wrought the error ! But for it, the sun of her memory would have had its brief, befitting day and tender setting. Presumptuous folly, to suppose they would understand my masterpiece, when they so often misconceive the hidden heart of His beautiful works, and convert the uncomprehended good and true into a curse of evil ! ”

The night fell. He was awaiting it. Nearer and nearer rolled the dark, suffering heart of a storm ; nearer towards the calm, white breasts of the dead. Over the billowy graves the many-footed winds suddenly fled away in a wild, tumultuous cohort. Overhead, great black bulks swung heavily at one another across the tremulous stars.

Of all earthly spots, where does the awful discord of the elements seem so futile and theatric as in a vast cemetery? Blow, then, winds, till you uproot the trees! Pour, floods, pour till the water trickles down into the face of the pale sleeper below! Rumble and flash, ye clouds, till the earth trembles and seems to be aflame! But not a lock of hair, so carefully put back over the brows, is tossed or disordered. The sleeper has not stretched forth an arm and drawn the shroud closer about his face, to keep out the wet. Not an ear has heard the riving thunderbolt, nor so much as an eyelid trembled on the still eyes for all the lightning's fury.

But had there been another human presence on the midnight scene, some lightning flash would have revealed the old man, grand, a terrible figure, in sympathy with its wild, sad violence. He stood beside his masterpiece, towering to his utmost height in a posture of all but superhuman majesty and strength. His long white hair and longer white beard streamed outward on the roaring winds. His arms, bared to his shoulder, swung, aloft a ponderous hammer. His face, ashen-gray as the marble before him, was set with an expression of stern despair. Then, as the thunder crashed, his hammer fell on the monument. Bolt after bolt, blow after blow. Once more he might have been seen kneeling beside the ruin, his eyes strained close to its heart, awaiting another flash to tell him that the inviolable epitaph had shared in the destruction.

For days following many curious eyes came to peer into the opened heart of the shattered structure, but in vain.

Thus the masterpiece of Nicholas failed to its end, though it served another. For no one could have heard the story of it, before it was destroyed, without being made to realise how melancholy that a man should rear a monument of execration to the false heart of the woman he once had loved; and how terrible for mankind to celebrate the dead for the evil that was in them instead of the good.

R. L. Stevenson (1850-1894)

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YOSHIDA-TORAJIRO

The name at the head of this page is probably unknown to the English reader, and yet I think it should become a household word like that of Garibaldi or John Brown. Some day soon, we may expect to hear more fully the details of Yoshida's history, and the degree of his influence in the transformation of Japan; even now there must be Englishmen acquainted with the subject, and perhaps the appearance of this sketch may elicit something more complete and exact. I wish to say that I am not, rightly speaking, the author of the present paper: I tell the story on the authority of an intelligent Japanese gentleman, Mr. Taiso Masaki, who told it me with an emotion that does honour to his heart; and though I have taken some pains, and sent my notes to him to be corrected, this can be no more than an imperfect outline.

Yoshida-Torajiro was son to the hereditary military instructor of the house of Choshu. The name you are to pronounce with an equality of accent on the different syllables, almost as in French, the vowels as in Italian, but the consonants in the English manner except the *j*, which has the French sound, or, as it has been cleverly proposed to write it, the sound of *zh*. Yoshida was very learned in Chinese letters,

or, as we might say in the classics, and in his father's subjects; fortification was among his favourite studies, and he was a poet from his boyhood. He was born to a lively and intelligent patriotism; the condition of Japan was his great concern; and while he projected a better future, he lost no opportunity of improving his knowledge of her present state. With this end he was continually travelling in his youth, going on foot and sometimes with three days' provision on his back, in the brave, self-helpful manner of all heroes. He kept a full diary while he was thus upon his journeys, but it is feared that these notes have been destroyed. If their value were in any respect such as we have reason to expect from the man's character, this would be a loss not easy to exaggerate. It is still wonderful to the Japanese how far he contrived to push these explorations; a cultured gentleman of that land and period would leave a complimentary poem wherever he had been hospitably entertained; and a friend of Mr. Masaki, who was likewise a great wanderer, has found such traces of Yoshida's passage in very remote regions of Japan.

Politics is perhaps the only profession for which no preparation is thought necessary; but Yoshida considered otherwise, and he studied the miseries of his fellow-countrymen with as much attention and research as though he had been going to write a book instead of merely to propose a remedy. To a man of his intensity and singleness, there is no question but that this survey was melancholy in the extreme. His dissatisfaction is proved by the eagerness with which he threw himself into the cause of reform; and what would have discouraged another braced Yoshida for his task. As he professed the theory of arms, it

was firstly the defences of Japan that occupied his mind. The external feebleness of that country was then illustrated by the manners of overriding barbarians, and the visits of big barbarian war ships: she was a country beleaguered. Thus the patriotism of Yoshida took a form which may be said to have defeated itself: he had it upon him to keep out these all-powerful foreigners, whom it is now one of his chief merits to have helped to introduce; but a man who follows his own virtuous heart will be always found in the end to have been fighting for the best. One thing leads naturally to another in an awakened mind, and that with an upward progress from effect to cause. The power and knowledge of these foreigners were things inseparable; by envying them their military strength, Yoshida came to envy them their culture; from the desire to equal them in the first, sprang his desire to share with them in the second; and thus he is found treating in the same book of a new scheme to strengthen the defences of Kioto and of the establishment, in the same city, of a university of foreign teachers. He hoped, perhaps, to get the good of other lands without their evil; to enable Japan to profit by the knowledge of the barbarians, and still keep her inviolate with her own arts and virtues. But whatever was the precise nature of his hope, the means by which it was to be accomplished were both difficult and obvious. Some one with eyes and understanding must break through the official cordon, escape into the new world, and study this other civilisation on the spot. And who could be better suited for the business? It was not without danger, but he was without fear. It needed preparation and insight; and what had he done since he was a child but

prepare himself with the best culture of Japan, and acquire in his excursions the power and habit of observing ?

He was but twenty-two, and already all this was clear in his mind, when news reached Choshu that Commodore Perry was lying near to Yeddo. Here, then, was the patriot's opportunity. Among the Samurai of Choshu, and in particular among the councillors of the Daimio, his general culture, his views, which the enlightened were eager to accept, and, above all, the prophetic charm, the radiant persuasion of the man, had gained him many and sincere disciples. He had thus a strong influence at the provincial Court; and so he obtained leave to quit the district, and, by way of a pretext, a privilege to follow his profession in Yeddo. Thither he hurried, and arrived in time to be too late: Perry had weighed anchor, and his sails had vanished from the waters of Japan. But Yoshida, having put his hand to the plough, was not the man to go back; he had entered upon business, and, please God, he would carry it through; and so he gave up his professional career and remained in Yeddo to be at hand against the next opportunity. By this behaviour he put himself into an attitude towards his superior, the Daimio of Choshu, which I cannot thoroughly explain. Certainly, he became a *Ronyin*, a broken man, a feudal outlaw; certainly he was liable to be arrested if he set foot upon his native province; yet I am cautioned that "he did not really break his allegiance," but only so far separated himself as that the prince could no longer be held accountable for his late vassal's conduct. There is some nicety of feudal custom here that escapes my comprehension.

In Yeddo, with this nondescript political status, and cut off from any means of livelihood, he was joyfully supported by those who sympathised with his design. One was Sákuma-Shozan, hereditary retainer of one of the Shogun's councillors, and from him he got more than money or than money's worth. A steady, respectable man, with an eye to the world's opinion, Sákuma was one of those who, if they cannot do great deeds in their own person, have yet an ardour of admiration for those who can, that recommends them to the gratitude of history. They aid and abet greatness more, perhaps, than we imagine. One thinks of them in connection with Nicodemus, who visited our Lord by night. And Sákuma was in a position to help Yoshida more practically than by simple countenance; for he could read Dutch, and was eager to communicate what he knew.

While the young Ronyin thus lay studying in Yeddo, news came of a Russian ship at Nangasaki. No time was to be lost. Sákuma contributed "a long copy of encouraging verses;" and off set Yoshida on foot for Nangasaki. His way lay through his own province of Choshu; but, as the highroad to the south lay apart from the capital, he was able to avoid arrest. He supported himself, like a *trouvère*, by his proficiency in verse. He carried his works along with him, to serve as an introduction. When he reached a town he would inquire for the house of any one celebrated for swordsmanship, or poetry, or some of the other acknowledged forms of culture; and there, on giving a taste of his skill, he would be received and entertained, and leave behind him, when he went away, a compliment in verse. Thus he travelled through the Middle Ages on his voyage of discovery.

into the nineteenth century. When he reached Nangasaki he was once more too late. The Russians were gone. But he made a profit on his journey in spite of fate, and stayed awhile to pick up scraps of knowledge from the Dutch interpreters—a low class of men, but one that had opportunities; and then, still full of purpose, he returned to Yeddo on foot, as he had come.

It was not only his youth and courage that supported him under these successive disappointments, but the continual affluence of new disciples. The man had the tenacity of a Bruce or a Columbus, with a pliability that was all his own. He did not fight for what the world would call success; but for “the wages of going on.” Check him off in a dozen directions, he would find another outlet and break forth. He missed one vessel after another, and the main work still halted; but so long as he had a single Japanese to enlighten and prepare for the better future, he could still feel that he was working for Japan. Now, he had scarce returned from Nangasaki, when he was sought out by a new inquirer, the most promising of all. This was a common soldier, of the Hemming class, a dyer by birth, who had heard vaguely * of Yoshida’s movements, and had become filled with

* Yoshida, when on his way to Nangasaki, met the soldier and talked with him by the roadside; they then parted, but the soldier was so much struck by the words he heard, that on Yoshida’s return he sought him out and declared his intention of devoting his life to the good cause. I venture, on the absence of the writer, to insert this correction, having been present when the story was told by Mr. Masaki.—F.J. And I, there being none to settle the difference, must reproduce both versions.—R.L.S.

wonder as to their design. This was a far different inquirer from Sákuma-Shozan, or the councillors of the Daimio of Choshu. This was no two-sworded gentleman, but the common stuff of the country, born in low traditions and unimproved by books; and yet that influence, that radiant persuasion that never failed Yoshida in any circumstance of his short life, enchanted, enthralled, and converted the common soldier, as it had done already with the elegant and learned. The man instantly burned up into a true enthusiasm; his mind had been only waiting for a teacher; he grasped in a moment the profit of these new ideas; he, too, would go to foreign, outlandish parts, and bring back the knowledge that was to strengthen and renew Japan; and in the meantime that he might be the better prepared, Yoshida set himself to teach, and he to learn, the Chinese literature. It is an episode most honourable to Yoshida, and yet more honourable still to the soldier, and to the capacity and virtue of the common people of Japan.

And now, at length, Commodore Perry returned to Simoda. Friends crowded round Yoshida with help, councils, and encouragement. One presented him with a great sword, three feet long and very heavy, which, in the exultation of the hour, he swore to carry throughout his wanderings, and to bring back—a far-travelled weapon—to Japan. A long letter was prepared in Chinese for the American officers; it was revised and corrected by Sákuma, and signed by Yoshida, under the name of Urinaki-Manji, and by the soldier under that of Ichigi-Koda. Yoshida had supplied himself with a profusion of materials for writing; his dress was literally stuffed with paper which was to come back again enriched with his

observations, and make a great and happy kingdom of Japan. Thus equipped, this pair of emigrants set forward on foot from Yeddo, and reached Simoda about night-fall. At no period within history can travel have presented to any European creature the same face of awe and terror as to these courageous Japanese. The descent of Ulysses into hell is a parallel more near the case than the boldest expedition in the Polar circles. For their act was unprecedented; it was criminal; and it was to take them beyond the pale of humanity into a land of devils. It is not to be wondered at if they were thrilled by the thought of their unusual situation; and perhaps the soldier gave utterance to the sentiment of both when he sang, "in Chinese singing" (so that we see he had already profited by his lessons), these two appropriate verses:

"We do not know where we are to sleep to-night,
In a thousand miles of desert where we can see no human
smoke."

In a little temple, hard by the sea-shore, they lay down to repose; sleep overtook them as they lay; and when they awoke, "the east was already white" for their last morning in Japan. They seized a fisherman's boat and rowed out—Perry lying far to sea because of the two tides. Their very manner of boarding was significant of determination; for they had no sooner caught hold upon the ship than they kicked away their boat to make return impossible. And now you would have thought that all was over. But the Commodore was already in treaty with the Shogun's Government; it was one of the stipulations that no Japanese was to be aided in escaping from Japan;

and Yoshida and his follower were handed over as prisoners to the authorities at Simoda. That night he who had been to explore the secrets of the barbarian slept, if he might sleep at all, in a cell too short for lying down at full length, and too low for standing upright. There are some disappointments too great for commentary.

Sákuma, implicated by his handwriting, was sent into his own province in confinement, from which he was soon released. Yoshida and the soldier suffered a long and miserable period of captivity, and the latter, indeed, died, while yet in prison, of a skin disease. But such a spirit as that of Yoshida-Torajiro is not easily made or kept a captive; and that which cannot be broken by misfortune you shall seek in vain to confine in a bastille. He was indefatigably active, writing reports to Government and treatises for dissemination. These latter were contraband; and yet he found no difficulty in their distribution, for he always had the jailor on his side. It was in vain that they kept changing him from one prison to another; Government by that plan only hastened the spread of new ideas; for Yoshida had only to arrive to make a convert. Thus, though he himself was laid by the heels, he confirmed and extended his party in the State.

At last, after many lesser transferences, he was given over from the prisons of the Shogun to those of his own superior, the Daimio of Choshu. I conceive it possible that he may then have served out his time for the attempt to leave Japan, and was now resigned to the provincial Government on a lesser count, as a Ronyin or feudal rebel. But, however that may be, the change was of great importance to Yoshida; for

by the influence of his admirers, in the Daimio's council, he was allowed the privilege, underhand, of dwelling in his own house. And there, as well to keep up communication with his fellow-reformers as to pursue his work of education, he received boys to teach. It must not be supposed that he was free; he was too marked a man for that; he was probably assigned to some small circle, and lived, as we should say, under police surveillance; but to him, who had done so much from under lock and key, this would seem a large and profitable liberty.

It was at this period that Mr. Masaki was brought into personal contact with Yoshida; and hence, through the eyes of a boy of thirteen, we get one good look at the character and habits of the hero. He was ugly and laughably disfigured with the small pox; and while nature had been so niggardly with him from the first, his personal habits were even sluttish. His clothes were wretched; when he ate or washed he wiped his hands upon his sleeves; and as his hair was not tied more than once in two months, it was often disgusting to behold. With such a picture, it is easy to believe that he never married. A good teacher, gentle in act, although violent and abusive in speech, his lessons were apt to go over the heads of his scholars, and to leave them gaping, or more often laughing. Such was his passion for study that he even grudged himself natural repose; and when he grew drowsy over his books he would, if it was summer, put mosquitoes up his sleeve; and, if it was winter, take off his shoes and run barefoot on the snow. His handwriting was exceptionally villainous; poet though he was, he had no taste for what was elegant; and in a country where to write beautifully was not

the mark of a scrivener but an admired accomplishment for gentlemen, he suffered his letters to be jolted out of him by the press of matter and the heat of his convictions. He would not tolerate even the appearance of a bribe; for bribery lay at the root of much that was evil in Japan, as well as in countries nearer home; and once when a merchant brought him his son to educate, and added, as was customary,* a little private sweetener, Yoshida dashed the money in the giver's face, and launched into such an outbreak of indignation as made the matter public in the school. He was still, when Masaki knew him, much weakened by his hardships in prison; and the presentation sword, three feet long, was too heavy for him to wear without distress; yet he would always gird it on when he went to dig in his garden. That is a touch which qualifies the man. A weaker nature would have shrunk from the sight of what only commemorated a failure. But he was of Thoreau's mind, that if you can "make your failure tragical by courage, it will not differ from success." He could look back without confusion to his enthusiastic promise. If events had been contrary, and he found himself unable to carry out that purpose—well, there was but the more reason to be brave and constant in another; if he could not carry the sword into barbarian lands, it should at least be witness to a life spent entirely for Japan.

This is the sight we have of him as he appeared to schoolboys, but not related in the schoolboy spirit.

* I understood that the merchant was endeavouring surreptitiously to obtain for his son instruction to which he was not entitled—F.J.

A man so careless of the graces must be out of court with boys and women. And, indeed, as we have all been more or less to school, it will astonish no one that Yoshida was regarded by his scholars as a laughing-stock. The schoolboy has a keen sense of humour. Heroes he learns to understand and to admire in books; but he is not forward to recognise the heroic under the traits of any contemporary man, and least of all in a brawling, dirty, and eccentric teacher. But as the years went by, and the scholars of Yoshida continued in vain to look around them for the abstractly perfect, and began more and more to understand the drift of his instructions, they learned to look back upon their comic school-master as upon the noblest of mankind.

The last act of this brief and full existence was already near at hand. Some of his work was done; for already there had been Dutch teachers admitted into Nangasaki, and the country at large was keen for the new learning. But though the renaissance had begun, it was impeded and dangerously threatened by the power of the Shogun. His minister—the same who was afterwards assassinated in the snow in the very midst of his body-guard—not only held back pupils from going to the Dutchmen, but by spies and detectives, by imprisonment and death, kept thinning out of Japan the most intelligent and active spirits. It is the old story of a power upon its last legs—Learning to the bastille, and courage to the block; when there are none left but sheep and donkeys, the State will have been saved. But a man must not think to cope with a Revolution; nor a minister, however fortified with guards, to hold in check a country that had given birth to such men as

Yoshida and his soldier-follower. The violence of the ministerial Tarquin only served to direct attention to the illegality of his master's rule; and people began to turn their allegiance from Yeddo and the Shogun to the long-forgotten Mikado in his seclusion at Kioto. At this juncture, whether in consequence or not, the relations between these two rulers became strained; and the Shogun's minister set forth for Kioto to put another affront upon the rightful sovereign. The circumstance was well fitted to precipitate events. It was a piece of religion to defend the Mikado; it was a plain piece of political righteousness to oppose a tyrannical and bloody usurpation. To Yoshida the moment for action seemed to have arrived. He was himself still confined in Choshu. Nothing was free but his intelligence; but with that he sharpened a sword for the Shogun's minister. A party of his followers were to waylay the tyrant at a village on the Yeddo and Kioto road, present him with a petition, and put him to the sword. But Yoshida and his friends were closely observed; and the too great expedition of two of the conspirators, a boy of eighteen and his brother, wakened the suspicion of the authorities, and led to a full discovery of the plot and the arrest of all who were concerned.

In Yeddo, to which he was taken, Yoshida was thrown again into a strict confinement. But he was not left destitute of sympathy in this last hour of trial. In the next cell lay one Kusákabé, a reformer from the southern highlands of Satzuma. They were in prison for different plots indeed, but for the same intention; they shared the same beliefs and the same aspirations for Japan; many and long were the

conversations they held through the prison wall, and dear was the sympathy that soon united them. It fell first to the lot of Kusákabé to pass before the judges; and when sentence had been pronounced he was led towards the place of death below Yoshida's window. To turn the head would have been to implicate his fellow-prisoner; but he threw him a look from his eye, and bade him farewell in a loud voice, with these two Chinese verses:—

“ It is better to be a crystal and be broken,
Than to remain perfect like a tile upon the housetop.”

So Kusákabé, from the highlands of Satzuma, passed out of the theatre of this world. His death was like an antique worthy's.

A little after, and Yoshida too must appear before the Court. His last scene was of a piece with his career, and fitly crowned it. He seized on the opportunity of a public audience, confessed and gloried in his design, and, reading his auditors a lesson in the history of their country, told at length the illegality of the Shogun's power and the crimes by which its exercise was sullied. So, having said his say for once, he was led forth and executed thirty-one years old.

A military engineer, a bold traveller (at least in wish), a poet, a patriot, a school-master, a friend to learning, a martyr to reform,—there are not many men, dying at seventy, who have served their country in such various characters. He was not only wise and provident in thought, but surely one of the fieriest of heroes in execution. It is hard to say

which is most remarkable—his capacity for command, which subdued his very jailors; his hot, unflagging zeal; or his stubborn superiority to defeat. He failed in each particular enterprise that he attempted; and yet we have only to look at his country to see how complete has been his general success. His friends and pupils made the majority of leaders in that final Revolution, now some twelve years old; and many of them are, or were until the other day, high placed among the rulers of Japan. And when we see all round us these brisk intelligent students, with their strange foreign air, we should never forget how Yoshida marched afoot from Choshu to Yeddo, and from Yeddo to Nangasaki, and from Nangasaki back again to Yeddo; how he boarded the American ship, his dress stuffed with writing material; nor how he languished in prison, and finally gave his death, as he had formerly given all his life and strength and leisure, to gain for his native land that very benefit which she now enjoys so largely. It is better to be Yoshida and perish, than to be only Sákuma and yet save the hide. Kusákabé, of Satzuma, has said the word; it is better to be a crystal and be broken.

I must add a word; for I hope the reader will not fail to perceive that this is as much the story of a heroic people as that of a heroic man. It is not enough to remember Yoshida; we must not forget the common soldier, nor Kusákabé, nor the boy of eighteen, Nomura, of Choshu, whose eagerness betrayed the plot. It is exhilarating to have lived in the same days with these great-hearted gentlemen. Only a few miles from us, to speak by the proportion of the universe, while I was droning over my lessons,

Yoshida was goading himself to be wakeful with the stings of the mosquito; and while you were grudging a penny income tax, Kusákabé was stepping to death with a noble sentence on his lips.

Henry van Dyke (born 1852)

SALT

Ye are the salt of the earth.—MATTHEW v. 13.

This figure of speech is plain and pungent. Salt is savory, purifying, preservative. It is one of those superfluities which the great French wit defined as "things that are very necessary." From the very beginning of human history men have set a high value upon it and sought for it in caves and by the seashore. The nation that had a good supply of it was counted rich. A bag of salt, among the barbarous tribes, was worth more than a man. The Jews prized it especially because they lived in a warm climate where food was difficult to keep, and because their religion laid particular emphasis on cleanliness, and because salt was largely used in their sacrifices.

Christ chose an image which was familiar when He said to His disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth." This was His conception of their mission, their influence. They were to cleanse and sweeten the world in which they lived, to keep it from decay, to give a new and more wholesome flavor to human existence. Their character was not to be passive, but active. The sphere of its action was to be this present life. There is no use in saving salt for heaven. It will not be needed there. Its mission is to permeate, season, and purify things on earth.

Now, from one point of view, it was an immense compliment for the disciples to be spoken to in this way. Their Master showed great confidence in them.

He set a high value upon them. The historian Livy could find nothing better to express his admiration for the people of ancient Greece than this very phrase. He called them *sal gentium* "the salt of the nations."

But it was not from this point of view that Christ was speaking. He was not paying compliments. He was giving a clear and powerful call to duty. His thought was not that His disciples should congratulate themselves on being better than other men. He wished them to ask themselves whether they actually had in them the purpose and the power to make other men better. Did they intend to exercise a purifying, seasoning, saving influence in the world? Were they going to make their presence felt on earth and felt for good? If not, they would be failures and frauds. The savor would be out of them. They would be like lumps of rock salt which has lain too long in a damp storehouse; good for nothing but to be thrown away and trodden under foot; worth less than common rock or common clay, because it would not even make good roads.

Men of privilege without power are waste material. Men of enlightenment without influence are the poorest kind of rubbish. Men of intellectual and moral and religious culture, who are not active forces for good in society, are not worth what it costs to produce and keep them. If they pass for Christian they are guilty of obtaining respect under false pretenses. They were meant to be the salt of the earth. And the first duty of salt is to be salty.

This is the subject on which I want to speak to you to-day. The saltiness of salt is the symbol of a noble, powerful, truly religious life.

You college students are men of privilege. It costs ten times as much, in labor and care and money, to bring you out where you are to-day as it costs to educate the average man, and a hundred times as much as it costs to raise a boy without any education. This fact brings you face to face with a question: Are you going to be worth your salt?

You have had mental training and plenty of instruction in various branches of learning. You ought to be full of intelligence. You have had moral discipline, and the influences of good example have been steadily brought to bear upon you. You ought to be full of principle. You have had religious advantages and abundant inducements to choose the better part. You ought to be full of faith. What are you going to do with your intelligence, your principle, your faith? It is your duty to make active use of them for the seasoning, the cleansing, the saving of the world. Do not be sponges. Be the salt of the earth.

Think, first, of the influence for good which men of intelligence may exercise in the world if they will only put their culture to the right use. Half the troubles of mankind come from ignorance—ignorance which is systematically organized with societies for its support and newspapers for its dissemination—ignorance which consists less in not knowing things than in wilfully ignoring the things that are already known. There are certain physical diseases which would go out of existence in ten years if people could only remember what has been learned. There are certain political and social plagues which are propagated only in the atmosphere of shallow self-confidence and vulgar thoughtlessness. There is a

yellow fever of literature specially adapted and prepared for the spread of shameless curiosity, incorrect information, and complacent idiocy among all classes of the population. Persons who fall under the influence of this pest become so triumphantly ignorant that they cannot distinguish between news and knowledge. They develop a morbid thirst for printed matter, and the more they read the less they learn. They are fit soil for the bacteria of folly and fanaticism.

Now the men of thought, of cultivation, of reason in the community ought to be an antidote to these dangerous influences. Having been instructed in the lessons of history and science and philosophy they are bound to contribute their knowledge to the service of society. As a rule they are willing enough to do this for pay, in the professions of law and medicine and teaching and divinity. What I plead for is the wider, nobler, unpaid service which an educated man renders to society simply by being thoughtful and by helping other men to think.

The college men of a country ought to be its most conservative men; that is to say, the men who do most to conserve it. They ought to be the men whom demagogues cannot inflame nor political bosses pervert. They ought to bring wild theories to the test of reason, and withstand rash experiments with obstinate prudence. When it is proposed, for example, to enrich the whole nation by debasing its currency, they should be the men who demand time to think whether real wealth can be created by artificial legislation. And if they succeed in winning time to think, the danger will pass—or rather it will be transformed into some other danger requiring a new

application of the salt of intelligence. For the fermenting activity of ignorance is incessant, and perpetual thoughtfulness is the price of social safety.

But it is not ignorance alone that works harm in the body of society. Passion is equally dangerous. Take, for instance, a time when war is imminent. How easily and how wildly the passions of men are roused by the mere talk of fighting. How ready they are to plunge into a fierce conflict for an unknown motive, for a base motive, or for no motive at all. Educated men should be the steadiest opponents of war while it is avoidable. But when it becomes inevitable, save at a cost of a failure in duty and a loss of honor, then they should be the most vigorous advocates of carrying it to a swift, triumphant, and noble end. No man ought to be too much educated to love his country and, if need be, to die for it. The culture which leaves a man without a flag is only one degree less miserable than that which leaves him without a God. To be empty of enthusiasms and overflowing with criticisms is not a sign of cultivation, but of enervation. The best learning is that which intensifies a man's patriotism as well as clarifies it. The finest education is that which puts a man in closest touch with his fellow-men. The true intelligence is that which acts, not as cayenne pepper to sting the world, but as salt to cleanse and conserve it.

Think, in the second place, of the duty which men of moral principle owe to society in regard to the evils which corrupt and degrade it. Of the existence of these evils we need to be reminded again and again, just because we are comparatively clean and decent and upright people. Men who live an orderly life are

in great danger of doing nothing else. We wrap our virtue up in little bags of respectability and keep it in the storehouse of a safe reputation. But if it is genuine virtue it is worthy of a better use than that. It is fit, nay it is designed and demanded, to be used as salt, for the purifying of human life.

There are multitudes of our fellow-men whose existence is dark, confused, and bitter. Some of them are groaning under the burden of want; partly because of their own idleness or incapacity, no doubt, but partly also because of the rapacity, greed, and injustice of other men. Some of them are tortured in bondage to vice; partly by their own false choice, no doubt, but partly also for want of guidance and good counsel and human sympathy. Every great city contains centers of moral decay which an honest man cannot think of without horror, pity, and dread. The trouble is that many honest folk dislike these emotions so much that they shut their eyes and walk through the world with their heads in the air, breathing a little atmosphere of their own, and congratulating themselves that the world goes very well now. But is it well that the things which eat the heart out of manhood and womanhood should go on in all our great towns?

Is it well that while we range with science, glorying in the
time,

City children soak and blacken soul and sense in city slime?

There, among the glooming alleys, progress halts on palsied
feet:

Crime and hunger cast our maidens by the thousand on the
street.

There the smoldering fire of fever creeps across the rotted floor,
And the crowded couch of incest, in the warrens of the poor.

Even in what we call respectable society, forces of

corruption are at work. Are there no unrighteous practices in business, no false standards in social life, no licensed frauds and falsehoods in politics, no vile and vulgar tendencies in art and literature and journalism, in this sunny and self-complacent modern world of which we are a part? All these things are signs of decay. The question for us as men of salt is: What are we going to do to arrest and counteract these tendencies? It is not enough for us to take a negative position in regard to them. If our influence is to be real, it must be positive. It is not enough to say "Touch not the unclean thing." On the contrary, we must touch it, as salt touches decay to check and overcome it. Good men are not meant to be simply like trees planted by rivers of water, flourishing in their own pride and for their own sake. They ought to be like the eucalyptus trees which have been set out in the marshes of the Campagna, from which a healthful, tonic influence is said to be diffused to countervail the malaria. They ought to be like the tree of paradise, "whose leaves are for the healing of nations."

Where good men are in business, lying and cheating and gambling should be more difficult, truth and candor and fair dealing should be easier and more popular, just because of their presence. Where good men are in society, grossness of thought and speech ought to stand rebuked, high ideals and courtliness and chivalrous actions and "the desire of fame and all that makes a man" ought to seem at once more desirable and more attainable to every one who comes into contact with them.

There have been men of this quality in the world. It is recorded of Barnardino of Siena, that when he

came into the room, his gentleness and purity were so evident that all that was base and silly in the talk of his companions was abashed and fell into silence. Artists like Fra Angelico have made their pictures like prayers. Warriors like the Chevalier Bayard and Sir Philip Sidney and Henry Havelock and Chinese Gordon have dwelt amid camps and conflicts as Knights of the Holy Ghost. Philosophers like John Locke and George Berkeley, men of science like Newton and Herschel, poets like Wordsworth and Tennyson and Browning, have taught virtue by their lives as well as wisdom by their works. Humanitarians like Howard and Wilberforce and Raikes and Charles Brace have given themselves to noble causes. Every man who will has it in his power to make his life count for something positive in the redemption of society. And this is what every man of moral principle is bound to do if he wants to belong to the salt of the earth.

There is a loftier ambition than merely to stand high in the world. It is to stoop down and lift mankind a little higher. There is a nobler character than that which is merely incorruptible. It is the character which acts as an antidote and preventive of corruption. Fearlessly to speak the words which bear witness to righteousness and truth and purity; patiently to do the deeds which strengthen virtue and kindle hope in your fellow-men; generously to lend a hand to those who are trying to climb upward; faithfully to give your support and your personal help to the efforts which are making to elevate and purify the social life of the world,—that is what it means to have salt in your character. And that is the way to make your life interesting and savory

and powerful. The men that have been happiest, and the men that are the best remembered, are the men that have done good.

What the world needs to-day is not a new system of ethics. It is simply a larger number of people who will make a steady effort to live up to the system that they have already. There is plenty of room for heroism in the plainest kind of duty. The greatest of all wars has been going on for centuries. It is the ceaseless, glorious conflict against the evil that is in the world. Every warrior who will enter that age-long battle may find a place in the army, and win his spurs, and achieve honor, and obtain favor with the great Captain of the Host, if he will but do his best to make his life purer and finer for every one that lives.

It is one of the burning questions of to-day whether university life and training really fit men for taking their share in this supreme conflict. There is no abstract answer; but every college class that graduates is a part of the concrete answer. Therein lies your responsibility, Gentlemen. It lies with you to illustrate the meanness of an education which produces learned shirks and refined skulkers; or to illuminate the perfection of unselfish culture with the light of devotion to humanity. It lies with you to confess that you have not been strong enough to assimilate your privileges; or to prove that you are able to use all that you have learned for the end for which it was intended. I believe the difference in the results depends very much less upon the educational system than it does upon the personal quality of the teachers and the men. Richard Porson was a university man, and he seemed to live chiefly to drink port and read

Greek. Thomas Guthrie was a university man, and he proved that he meant what he said in his earnest verse,—

I live for those who love me,
For those who know me true,
For the heaven that bends above me,
And the good that I can do;
For the wrongs that need resistance,
For the cause that lacks assistance,
For the future in the distance,
And the good that I can do.

It remains only to speak briefly, in the third place, of the part which religion ought to play in the purifying, preserving, and sweetening of society. Hitherto I have spoken to you simply as men of intelligence and men of principle. But the loftiest reach of reason and the strongest inspiration of morality is religious faith. I know there are some thoughtful men, upright men, unselfish and useful men, who say that they have no such faith. But they are very few. And the reason of their rarity is because it is immensely difficult to be unselfish and useful and thoughtful, without a conscious faith in God, and in the divine law, and in the gospel of salvation, and in the future life. I trust that none of you are going to try that desperate experiment. I trust that all of you have religion to guide and sustain you in life's hard and perilous adventure. If you have, I beg you to make sure that it is the right kind of religion. The name makes little difference. The outward form makes little difference. The test of its reality is its power to cleanse life and make it worth living; to save the things that are most precious in our existence from corruption and decay; to lend a new lustre to our

ideals and to feed our hopes with inextinguishable light; to produce characters which shall fulfil Christ's word and be the salt of the earth.

Religion is something which a man cannot invent for himself, nor keep to himself. If it does not show in his conduct it does not exist in his heart. If he has just barely enough of it to save himself alone, it is doubtful whether he has even enough for that. Religion ought to bring out and intensify the flavor of all that is best in manhood, and make it fit, to use Wordsworth's noble phrase,

For human nature's daily food.

Good citizens, honest workmen, cheerful comrades, true friends, gentle men,—that is what the product of religion should be. And the power that produces such men is the great antiseptic of society, to preserve it from decay.

Decay begins in discord. It is the loss of balance in an organism. One part of the system gets too much nourishment, another part too little. Morbid processes are established. Tissues break down. In their debris all sorts of malignant growths take root. Ruin follows.

Now this is precisely the danger to which the social organism is exposed. From this danger religion is meant to preserve us. Certainly there can be no true Christianity which does not aim at this result. It should be a balancing, compensating, regulating power. It should keep the relations between man and man, between class and class, normal and healthful and mutually beneficent. It should humble the pride of the rich, and moderate the envy of the poor. It should soften and ameliorate the unavoidable inequalities of life, and transform them from causes of jealous

hatred into opportunities of loving and generous service. If it fails to do this it is salt without savor, and when a social revolution comes, as the consequence of social corruption, men will cast out the unsalted religion and tread it under foot.

Was not this what happened in the French Revolution? What did men care for the religion that had failed to curb sensuality and pride and cruelty under the oppression of the old régime, the religion that had forgotten to deal bread to the hungry, to comfort the afflicted, to break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free? What did they care for the religion that had done little or nothing to make men understand and love and help one another? Nothing. It was the first thing that they threw away in the madness of their revolt and trampled in the mire of their contempt.

But was the world much better off without that false kind of religion than with it? Did the Revolution really accomplish anything for the purification and preservation of society? No, it only turned things upside down, and brought the elements that had been at the bottom to the top. It did not really change the elements, or sweeten life, or arrest the processes of decay. The only thing that can do this is the true kind of religion, which brings men closer to one another by bringing them all nearer to God.

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I call you to-day, my brethren, to take your part, not with the idle, the frivolous, the faithless, the selfish, the gilded youth, but with the earnest, the manly, the devout, the devoted, the golden youth. I summon you to do your share in the renaissance of

religion for your own sake, for your fellowmen's sake, for your country's sake. On this fair Sunday, when all around us tells of bright hope and glorious promise, let the vision of our country, with her perils, with her opportunities, with her temptations, with her splendid powers, with her threatening sins, rise before our souls. What needs she more in this hour, than the cleansing, saving, conserving influence of right religion? What better service could we render her than to set our lives to the tune of these words of Christ, and be indeed the salt of our country, and, through her growing power, of the whole earth? Ah, bright will be the day, and full of glory, when the bells of every church, of every schoolhouse, of every college, of every university, ring with the music of this message, and find their echo in the hearts of the youth of America. That will be the chime of a new age.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

JEROME K. JEROME (born 1859) *

THE PASSING OF THE THIRD FLOOR BACK.

The neighbourhood of Bloomsbury Square towards four o'clock of a November afternoon is not so crowded as to secure to the stranger, of appearance anything out of the common, immunity from observation. Tibb's boy, screaming at the top of his voice that *she* was his honey, stopped suddenly, stepped backwards on to the toes of a voluble young lady wheeling a perambulator, remained deaf, apparently, to the somewhat personal remarks of the voluble young lady. Not until he had reached the next corner—and then more as a soliloquy than as information to the street—did Tibb's boy recover sufficient interest in his own affairs to remark that *he* was her bee. The voluble young lady herself, following some half-a-dozen yards behind, forgot her wrongs in contemplation of the stranger's back. There was this that was peculiar about the stranger's back: that instead of being flat it presented a decided curve. "It ain't a 'ump, and it don't look like kervitcher of the spine," observed the voluble young lady to herself. "Blimy if I don't believe 'e's taking 'ome 'is washing up his back."

* From *The Passing of the Third Floor Back and other stories* by Jerome K. Jerome by kind permission of the Author and the Publishers, Messrs. Hurst & Blackett, Ltd. London England.

The constable at the corner, trying to seem busy doing nothing, noticed the stranger's approach with gathering interest. "That's an odd sort of a walk of yours young man," thought the constable. "You take care you don't fall down and tumble over yourself."

"Thought he was a young man," murmured the constable, the stranger having passed him. "He had a young face right enough."

The daylight was fading. The stranger, finding it impossible to read the name of the street upon the corner house, turned back.

"Why 'tis a young man," the constable told himself; "a mere boy."

"I beg your pardon," said the stranger; "but would you mind telling me my way to Bloomsbury Square?"

"This is Bloomsbury Square," explained the constable; "leastways round the corner is. What number might you be wanting?"

The stranger took from the ticket pocket of his tightly buttoned overcoat a piece of paper, unfolded it and read it out: "Mrs. Pennycherry. Number Forty-eight."

"Round to the left," instructed him the constable; "fourth house. Been recommended there?"

"By—by a friend," replied the stranger. "Thank you very much."

"Ah," muttered the constable to himself; "guess you won't be calling him that by the end of the week, young—"

"Funny," added the constable, gazing after the retreating figure of the stranger. "Seen plenty of the other sex as looked young behind and old in front."

This cove looks young in front and old behind. Guess he'll look old all round if he stops long at Mother Pennycherry's: stingy old cat."

Constables whose beat included Bloomsbury Square had their reasons for not liking Mrs. Pennycherry. Indeed it might have been difficult to discover any human being with reasons for liking that sharp-featured lady. May be the keeping of second-rate boarding houses in the neighbourhood of Bloomsbury does not tend to develop the virtues of generosity and amiability.

Meanwhile the stranger, proceeding upon his way, had rung the bell of number forty-eight. Mrs. Pennycherry, peeping from the area and catching a glimpse, above the railings, of a handsome if somewhat effeminate masculine face, hastened to readjust her widow's cap before the looking-glass while directing Mary Jane to show the stranger, should he prove a problematical boarder, into the dining-room, and to light the gas.

"And don't stop gossiping, and don't you take it upon yourself to answer questions. Say I'll be up in a minute," were Mrs. Pennycherry's further instructions, "and mind you hide your hands as much as you can."

"What are you grinning at?" demanded Mrs. Pennycherry a couple of minutes later of the dingy Mary Jane.

"Wasn't grinning," explained the meek Mary Jane, "was only smiling to myself."

"What at?"

"Dunno," admitted Mary Jane. But still she went on smiling.

"What's he like then?" demanded Mrs. Pennycherry.

"'E 'ain't the usual sort," was Mary Jane's opinion.

"Thank God for that," ejaculated Mrs. Penny-cherry piously.

"Says 'e's been recommended, by a friend."

"By whom?"

"By a friend. 'E didn't say no name."

Mrs. Pennycherry pondered. "He's not the funny sort, is he?"

Not that sort at all. Mary Jane was sure of it

Mrs. Pennycherry ascended the stairs still pondering. As she entered the room the stranger rose and bowed. Nothing could have been simpler than the stranger's bow, yet there came with it to Mrs. Pennycherry a rush of old sensations long forgotten. For one brief moment Mrs. Pennycherry saw herself an amiable well-bred lady, widow of a solicitor: a visitor had called to see her. It was but a momentary fancy. The next instant Reality reasserted itself. Mrs. Pennycherry, a lodging-house keeper, existing precariously upon a daily round of petty meannesses, was prepared for contest with a possible new boarder, who fortunately looked an unexperienced young gentleman.

"Someone has recommended me to you," began Mrs. Pennycherry; "may I ask, who?"

But the stranger waived the question aside as immaterial.

"You might not remember—him," he smiled. "He thought that I should do well to pass the few months I am given—that I have to be in London, here. You can take me in?"

Mrs. Pennycherry thought that she would be able to take the stranger in.

"A room to sleep in," explained the stranger, "—any room will do—with food and drink sufficient for a man, is all that I require."

"For breakfast," began Mrs. Pennycherry, "I always give——"

"What is right and proper. I am convinced," interrupted the stranger. "Pray do not trouble to go into detail, Mrs. Pennycherry. With whatever it is I shall be content."

Mrs. Pennycherry, puzzled, shot a quick glance at the stranger, but his face, though the gentle eyes were smiling, was frank and serious.

"At all events you will see the room," suggested Mrs. Pennycherry, "before we discuss terms."

"Certainly," agreed the stranger. "I am a little tired and shall be glad to rest there."

Mrs. Pennycherry led the way upward; on the landing of the third floor, paused a moment undecided, then opened the door of the back bedroom.

"It is very comfortable," commented the stranger.

"For this room," stated Mrs. Pennycherry; "together with full board, consisting of——"

"Of everything needful. It goes without saying," again interrupted and the stranger with his quiet grave smile.

"I have generally asked," continued Mrs. Pennycherry, "four pounds a week. To you——" Mrs. Pennycherry's voice, unknown to her, took to itself the note of aggressive generosity, "seeing you have been recommended here, say three pound ten."

"Dear lady," said the stranger; "that is kind of you. As you have divined, I am not a rich man. If it be not imposing upon you I accept your reduction with gratitude."

Again Mrs. Pennycherry, familiar with the satirical method, shot a suspicious glance upon the stranger, but not a line was there, upon that smooth fair face, to which a sneer could for a moment have clung. Clearly he was as simple as he looked.

"Gas, of course, extra."

"Of course," agreed the stranger.

"Coals ———"

"We shall not quarrel," for a third time the stranger interrupted. "You have been very considerate to me as it is. I feel, Mrs. Pennycherry, I can leave myself entirely in your hands."

The stranger appeared anxious to be alone. Mrs. Pennycherry, having put a match to the stranger's fire, turned to depart. And at this point it was that Mrs. Pennycherry, the holder hitherto of an unbroken record for sanity, behaved in a manner she herself, five minutes earlier in her career, would have deemed impossible—that no living soul who had ever known her would have believed, even had Mrs. Pennycherry gone down upon her knees and sworn it to them.

"Did I say three pound ten?" demanded Mrs. Pennycherry of the stranger, her hand upon the door. She spoke crossly. She was feeling cross, with the stranger, with herself—particularly with herself.

"You were kind enough to reduce it to that amount," replied the stranger; "but if upon reflection you find yourself unable ———"

"I was making a mistake," said Mrs. Pennycherry, "it should have been two pound ten."

"I cannot—I will not accept such sacrifice," exclaimed the stranger; "the three pound ten I can well afford."

"Two pound ten are my terms," snapped Mrs. Pennycherry. "If you are bent on paying more, you can go elsewhere. You'll find plenty to oblige you."

Her vehemence must have impressed the stranger. "We will not contend further," he smiled. "I was merely afraid that in the goodness of your heart ———"

"Oh it isn't as good as all that," growled Mrs. Pennycherry.

"I am not so sure," returned the stranger, "I am somewhat suspicious of you. But wilful woman must, I suppose, have her way."

The stranger held out his hand, and to Mrs. Pennycherry, at that moment, it seemed the most natural thing in the world to take it as if it had been the hand of an old friend and to end the interview with a pleasant laugh—though laughing was an exercise not often indulged in by Mrs. Pennycherry.

Mary Jane was standing by the window, her hands folded in front of her, when Mrs. Pennycherry re-entered the kitchen. By standing close to the window one caught a glimpse of the trees in Bloomsbury Square and through their bare branches of the sky beyond.

"There's nothing much to do for the next half hour, till Cook comes back. I'll see to the door if you'd like a run out?" suggested Mrs. Pennycherry.

"It would be nice," agreed the girl so soon as she had recovered power of speech; "it's just the time of day I like."

"Don't be longer than the half hour," added Mrs. Pennycherry.

Forty-eight Bloomsbury Square, assembled after dinner in the drawing-room, discussed the stranger

with that freedom and frankness characteristic of Forty-eight Bloomsbury Square, towards the absent.

"Not what I call a smart young man," was the opinion of Augustus Longcord, who was something in the city.

"Thepeaking for mythelf," commented his partner Isidore, "havn'th any 'uthe for the thmart young man. Too many of him, ath it ith."

"Must be pretty smart if he's one too many for you," laughed his partner. There was this to be said for the repartee of Forty-eight Bloomsbury Square: it was simple of construction and easy of comprehension.

"Well it made me feel good just looking at him," declared Miss Kite, the highly coloured. "It was his clothes, I suppose—made me think of Noah and the ark—all that sort of thing."

"It would be clothes that would make you think—if anything," drawled the languid Miss Devine. She was a tall, handsome girl, engaged at the moment in futile efforts to decline with elegance and comfort combined upon a horse-hair sofa. Miss Kite, by reason of having secured the only easy-chair, was unpopular that evening; so that Miss Devine's remark received from the rest of the company more approbation than perhaps it merited.

"Is that intended to be clever, dear, or only rude?" Miss Kite requested to be informed.

"Both," claimed Miss Devine.

"Myself, I must confess," shouted the tall young lady's father, commonly called the Colonel, "I found him a fool."

"I noticed you seemed to be getting on very well together," purred his wife, a plump smiling little lady.

"Possibly we were," retorted the Colonel. "Fate has accustomed me to the society of fools."

"Isn't it a pity to start quarrelling immediately after dinner, you two," suggested their thoughtful daughter from the sofa, "you'll have nothing left to amuse you for the rest of the evening."

"He didn't strike me as a conversationalist," said the lady who was cousin to a baronet; "but he did pass the vegetables before he helped himself. A little thing like that shows breeding."

"Or that he didn't know you and thought may be you'd leave him half-a-spoonful," laughed Augustus the wit.

"What I can't make out about him——" shouted the Colonel.

The stranger entered the room.

The Colonel, securing the evening paper, retired into a corner. The highly coloured Kite, reaching down from the mantelpiece a paper fan, held it coyly before her face, Miss Devine sat upright on the horse-hair sofa, and rearranged her skirts.

"Know anything," demanded Augustus of the stranger, breaking the somewhat remarkable silence.

The stranger evidently did not understand. It was necessary for Augustus, the witty, to advance further into that odd silence.

"What's going to pull off the Lincoln Handicap? Tell me and I'll go out straight and put my shirt upon it."

"I think you would act unwisely," smiled the stranger; "I am not an authority upon the subject."

"Not! Why they told me you were Captain Spy of the Sporting Life—in disguise."

It would have been difficult for a joke to fall more flat. Nobody laughed, though why Mr. Augustus Longcord could not understand, and may be none of his audience could have told him, for at forty-eight Bloomsbury Square, Mr. Augustus Longcord passed as a humorist. The stranger himself appeared unaware that he was being made fun of.

"You have been misinformed," assured him the stranger.

"I beg your pardon," said Mr. Augustus Longcord.

"It is nothing," replied the stranger in his sweet low voice, and passed on.

"Well what about this theatre," demanded Mr. Longcord of his friend and partner; "do you want to go or don't you?" Mr. Longcord was feeling irritable.

"Goth the ticketh—may ath well," thought Isidore.

"Damn stupid piece, I'm told."

"Motht of them thupid, more or leth. Pity, to wathte the ticketh," argued Isidore, and the pair went out.

"Are you staying long in London?" asked Miss Kite, raising her practised eyes towards the stranger.

"Not long," answered the stranger. "At least, I do not know. It depends."

An unusual quiet had invaded the drawing-room of Forty-eight Bloomsbury Square, generally noisy with strident voices about this hour. The Colonel remained engrossed in his paper. Mrs. Devine sat with her plump white hands folded on her lap.

whether asleep or not it was impossible to say. The lady who was cousin to a baronet had shifted her chair beneath the gasalier, her eyes bent on her everlasting crochet work. The languid Miss Devine had crossed to the piano, where she sat fingering softly the tuneless keys, her back to the cold barely-furnished room.

"Sit down," commanded saucily Miss Kite, indicating with her fan the vacant seat beside her. "Tell me about yourself. You interest me." Miss Kite adopted a pretty authoritative air towards all youthful-looking members of the opposite sex. It harmonised with the peach complexion and the golden hair, and fitted her about as well.

"I am glad of that," answered the stranger, taking the chair suggested. "I so wish to interest you."

"You're a very bold boy." Miss Kite lowered her fan, for the purpose of glancing archly over the edge of it, and for the first time encountered the eyes of the stranger looking into hers. And then it was that Miss Kite experienced precisely the same curious sensation that an hour or so ago had troubled Mrs. Pennycherry when the stranger had first bowed to her. It seemed to Miss Kite that she was no longer the Miss Kite that, had she risen and looked into it, the fly-blown mirror over the marble mantelpiece would, she knew, have presented to her view; but quite another Miss Kite—a cheerful, bright-eyed lady verging on middle age, yet still good-looking in spite of her faded complexion and somewhat thin brown locks. Miss Kite felt a pang of jealousy shoot through her; this middle-aged Miss Kite seemed, on the whole, a more attractive lady. There was a

wholesomeness, a broad-mindedness about her that instinctively drew one towards her. Not hampered, as Miss Kite herself was, by the necessity of appearing to be somewhere between eighteen and twenty-two, this other Miss Kite could talk sensibly, even brilliantly: one felt it. A thoroughly "nice" woman this other Miss Kite; the real Miss Kite, though envious, was bound to admit it. Miss Kite wished to goodness she had never seen the woman. The glimpse of her had rendered Miss Kite dissatisfied with herself.

"I am not a boy," exclaimed the stranger; "and I had no intention of being bold."

"I know," replied Miss Kite. "It was a silly remark. Whatever induced me to make it, I can't think. Getting foolish in my old age, I suppose."

The stranger laughed. "Surely you are not old."

"I'm thirty-nine," snapped out Miss Kite. "You don't call it young?"

"I think it a beautiful age," insisted the stranger; "young enough not to have lost the joy of youth, old enough to have learnt sympathy."

"Oh I daresay," returned Miss Kite, "any age you'd think beautiful. I'm going to bed." Miss Kite rose. The paper fan had somehow got itself broken. She threw the fragments into the fire.

"It is early yet," pleaded the stranger, "I was looking forward to a talk with you."

"Well, you'll be able to look forward to it," retorted Miss Kite. "Good night."

The truth was, Miss Kite was impatient to have a look at herself in the glass, in her own room with

the door shut. The vision of that other Miss Kite—the clean-looking lady of the pale face and the brown hair had been so vivid, Miss Kite wondered whether temporary forgetfulness might not have fallen upon her while dressing for dinner that evening.

The stranger left to his own devices strolled towards the loo table, seeking something to read.

“ You seem to have frightened away Miss Kite,” remarked the lady who was cousin to a baronet.

“ It seems so,” admitted the stranger.

“ My cousin, Sir William Bosster,” observed the crocheting lady, “ who married old Lord Egham’s niece—you never met the Eghams?”

“ Hitherto,” replied the stranger. “ I have not had that pleasure.”

“ A charming family. Cannot understand—my cousin Sir William, I mean, cannot understand my remaining here. ‘ My dear Emily ’—he says the same thing every time he sees me: ‘ My dear Emily, how can you exist among the sort of people one meets with in a boarding-house.’ But they amuse me.”

A sense of humour, agreed the stranger, was always of advantage.

“ Our family on my mother’s side,” continued Sir William’s cousin in her placid monotone, “ was connected with the Tatton-Joneses, who when King George the Fourth—” Sir William’s cousin, needing another reel of cotton, glanced up, and met the stranger’s gaze.

“ I am sure I don’t know why I’m telling you all this,” said Sir William’s cousin in an irritable tone. “ It can’t possibly interest you.”

“ Everything connected with you interests me,” gravely the stranger assured her.

"It is very kind of you to say so," sighed Sir William's cousin, but without conviction; "I am afraid sometimes I bore people."

The polite stranger refrained from contradiction.

"You see," continued the poor lady, "I really am of good family."

"Dear lady," said the stranger, "your gentle face, your gentle voice, your gentle bearing, all proclaim it."

She looked without flinching into the stranger's eyes, and gradually a smile banished the reigning dullness of her features.

"How foolish of me." She spoke rather to herself than to the stranger. "Why, of course, people—people whose opinion is worth troubling about—judge of you by what you are, not by what you go about saying you are."

The stranger remained silent.

"I am the widow of a provincial doctor, with an income of just two hundred and thirty pounds per annum," she argued. "The sensible thing for me to do is to make the best of it, and to worry myself about these high and mighty relations of mine as little as they have ever worried themselves about me."

The stranger appeared unable to think of anything worth saying.

"I have other connections," remembered Sir William's cousin; "those of my poor husband, to whom instead of being the 'poor relation' I could be the fairy god-mama. They are my people—or would be," added Sir William's cousin tartly, "if I wasn't a vulgar snob."

She flushed the instant she had said the words and, rising, commenced preparations for a hurried departure.

"Now it seems I am driving you away," sighed the stranger.

"Having been called a 'vulgar snob,' " retorted the lady with some heat, "I think it about time I went."

"The words were your own," the stranger reminded her.

"Whatever I may have thought," remarked the indignant dame, "no lady—least of all in the presence of a total stranger—would have called herself —" The poor dame paused, bewildered. "There is something very curious the matter with me this evening, that I cannot understand," she explained, "I seem quite unable to avoid insulting myself."

Still surrounded by bewilderment, she wished the stranger good-night, hoping that when next they met she would be more herself. The stranger, hoping so also, opened the door and closed it again behind her.

"Tell me," laughed Miss Devine, who by sheer force of talent was contriving to wring harmony from the reluctant piano, "how did you manage to do it? I should like to know."

"How did I do what?" inquired the stranger.

"Contrive to get rid so quickly of those two old frumps?"

"How well you play!" observed the stranger. "I knew you had genius for music the moment I saw you."

"How could you tell?"

"It is written so clearly in your face."

The girl laughed well pleased. "You seem to have lost no time in studying my face."

"It is a beautiful and interesting face," observed the stranger.

She swung round sharply on the stool and their eyes met.

"You can read faces?"

"Yes."

"Tell me, what else do you read in mine?"

"Frankness, courage——"

"Ah yes, all the virtues. Perhaps. We will take them for granted." It was odd how serious the girl had suddenly become. "Tell me the reverse side."

"I see no reverse side," replied the stranger. "I see but a fair girl, bursting into noble womanhood."

"And nothing else? You read no trace of greed, of vanity, of sordidness, of——" An angry laugh escaped her lips. "And you are a reader of faces!"

"A reader of faces." The stranger smiled. "Do you know what is written upon yours at this very moment? A love of truth that is almost fierce, scorn of lies, scorn of hypocrisy, the desire for all things pure, contempt of all things that are contemptible—specially of such things as are contemptible in woman. Tell me, do I not read aright?"

I wonder, thought the girl, is that why those two others both hurried from the room? Does everyone feel ashamed of the littleness that is in them when looked at by those clear, believing eyes of yours?

The idea occurred to her: "Papa seemed to have a good deal to say to you during dinner. Tell me, what were you talking about?"

"The military looking gentleman upon my left? We talked about your mother principally."

"I am sorry," returned the girl, wishful now she had not asked the question. "I was hoping he might have chosen another topic for the first evening!"

"He did try one or two," admitted the stranger; "but I have been about the world so little, I was glad when he talked to me about himself. I feel we shall be friends. He spoke so nicely, too, about Mrs. Devine."

"Indeed," commented the girl.

"He told me he had been married for twenty years and had never regretted it but once!"

Her black eyes flashed upon him, but meeting his, the suspicion died from them. She turned aside to hide her smile.

"So he regretted it—once."

"Only once," explained the stranger, "a passing irritable mood. It was so frank of him to admit it. He told me—I think he has taken a liking to me. Indeed he hinted as much. He said he did not often get an opportunity of talking to a man like myself—he told me that he and your mother, when they travel together, are always mistaken for a honeymoon couple. Some of the experience he related to me were really quite amusing." The stranger laughed at recollection of them—"that even here in this place, they are generally referred to as 'Darby and Joan.'"

"Yes," said the girl, "that is true. Mr. Longcord gave them that name, the second evening after our arrival. It was considered clever—but rather obvious I thought myself."

"Nothing—so it seems to me," said the stranger, "is more beautiful than the love that has weathered the storms of life. The sweet, tender blossom that flowers in the heart of the young—in hearts such as yours—that, too, is beautiful. The love of the young for the young, that is the beginning of life. But the love of the old for the old, that is the beginning of—of things longer."

"You seem to find all things beautiful," the girl grumbled.

"But are not all things beautiful?" demanded the stranger.

The Colonel had finished his paper. "You two are engaged in a very absorbing conversation," observed the Colonel approaching them.

"We were discussing Darbies and Joans," explained his daughter. "How beautiful is the love that has weathered the storms of life!"

"Ah!" smiled the Colonel, "that is hardly fair. My friend has been repeating to cynical youth the confessions of an amorous husband's affection for his middle-aged and somewhat——" The Colonel in playful mood laid his hand upon the stranger's shoulder, an action that necessitated his looking straight into the stranger's eyes. The Colonel drew himself up stiffly and turned scarlet.

Somebody was calling the Colonel a cad. Not only that, but was explaining quite clearly, so that the Colonel could see it for himself, why he was a cad.

“That you and your wife lead a cat and dog existence is a disgrace to both of you. At least you might have the decency to try and hide it from the world—not make a jest of your shame to every passing stranger. You are a cad, Sir, a cad!”

Who was daring to say these things? Not the stranger, his lips had not moved. Besides, it was not his voice. Indeed it sounded much more like the voice of the Colonel himself. The Colonel looked from the stranger to his daughter, from his daughter back to the stranger. Clearly they had not heard the voice—a mere hallucination. The Colonel breathed again.

Yet the impression remaining was not to be shaken off. Undoubtedly it was bad taste to have joked to the stranger upon such a subject. No gentleman would have done so.

But then no gentleman would have permitted such a jest to be possible. No gentleman would be for ever wrangling with his wife—certainly never in public. However irritating the woman, a gentleman would have exercised self-control.

Mrs. Devine had risen, was coming slowly across the room. Fear laid hold of the Colonel. She was going to address some aggravating remark to him—he could see it in her eye—which would irritate him into savage retort. Even this prize idiot of a stranger would understand why boarding-house wits had dubbed them “Darby and Joan,” would grasp the fact that the galant Colonel had thought it, amusing, in conversation with a table acquaintance, to hold his own wife up to ridicule.

"My dear," cried the Colonel, hurrying to speak first, "does not this room strike you as cold? Let me fetch you a shawl."

It was useless: the Colonel felt it. It had been too long the custom of both of them to preface with politeness their deadliest insults to each other. She came on, thinking of a suitable reply: suitable from her point of view, that is. In another moment the truth would be out. A wild, fantastic possibility flashed through the Colonel's brain: If to him, why not to her?

"Letitia," cried the Colonel, and the tone of his voice surprised her into silence, "I want you to look closely at our friend. Does he not remind you of someone?"

Mrs. Devine, so urged, looked at the stranger long and hard. "Yes," she murmured, turning to her husband, "he does, who is it?"

"I cannot fix it," replied the Colonel; "I thought that maybe you would remember."

"It will come to me," mused Mrs. Devine. "It is someone—years ago, when I was a girl—in Devonshire. Thank you, if it isn't troubling you, Harry. I left it in the dining-room."

It was, as Mr. Augustus Longcord explained to his partner Isidore, the colossal foolishness of the stranger that was the cause of all the trouble. "Give me a man, who can take care of himself—or thinks he can," declared Augustus Longcord, "and I am prepared to give a good account of myself. But when a helpless baby refuses even to look at what you call your figures, tells you that your mere word is sufficient for him, and hands you over his cheque-book to fill up for yourself—well, it isn't playing the game."

"Auguthuth," was the curt comment of his partner, "you're a fool."

"All right, my boy, you try," suggested Augustus.

"Jutht what I mean to do," asserted his partner.

"Well," demanded Augustus one evening later, meeting Isidore ascending the stairs after a long talk with the stranger in the dining-room with the door shut.

"Oh don't arth me," retorted Isidore, "thilly ath, thath what he ith."

"What did he say?"

"What did he thay! talked about the Jewth: what a grand rathe they were—how people mith-judged them: all that thort of rot. Thaid thome of the motht honourable men he had ever met had been Jewth. Thought I wath one of 'em!"

"Well, did you get anything out of him?"

"Get anything out of him! Of courthe not. Couldn't very well thell the whole rathe, ath it were, for a couple of hundred poundth, after that. Didn't theem worth it."

There were many things Forty-eight Bloomsbury Square came gradually to the conclusion were not worth the doing:—Snatching at the gravy; pouncing out of one's turn upon the vegetables and helping oneself to more than one's fair share; manœuvring for the easy chair; sitting on the evening paper while pretending not to have seen it—all such-like tiresome bits of business. For the little one made out of it, really it was not worth the bother. Grumbling everlastingly at one's food; grumbling everlastingly at most things; abusing Pennycherry behind her back;

abusing, for a change, one's fellow-boarders; squabbling with one's fellow-boarders about nothing in particular; sneering at one's fellow-boarders; talking scandal of one's fellow-boarders; making senseless jokes about one's fellow-boarders; talking big about oneself, nobody believing one—all such-like vulgarities. Other boarding-houses might indulge in them: Forty-eight Bloomsbury Square had its dignity to consider.

The truth is, Forty-eight Bloomsbury Square was coming to a very good opinion of itself: for the which not Bloomsbury Square so much as the stranger must be blamed. The stranger had arrived at Forty-eight Bloomsbury Square with the preconceived idea—where obtained from, Heaven knows—that its seemingly common-place, mean-minded, coarse-fibred occupants were in reality ladies and gentlemen of the first water; and time and observation had apparently only strengthened this absurd idea. The natural result was, Forty-eight Bloomsbury Square was coming round to the stranger's opinion of itself.

Mrs. Pennycherry, the stranger would persist in regarding as a lady born and bred, compelled by circumstances over which she had no control to fill an arduous but honourable position in middle-class society—a sort of foster-mother, to whom were due the thanks and gratitude of her promiscuous family; and this view of herself Mrs. Pennycherry now clung to with obstinate conviction. There were disadvantages attaching, but these Mrs. Pennycherry appeared prepared to suffer cheerfully. A lady born and bred cannot charge other ladies and gentlemen for coals and candles they have never burnt; a foster-mother cannot palm off upon her children New Zealand

mutton for Southdown. A mere lodging-house-keeper can play these tricks, and pocket the profits. But a lady feels she cannot: Mrs. Pennycherry felt she no longer could.

To the stranger, Miss Kite was a witty and delightful conversationalist of most attractive personality. Miss Kite had one failing: it was lack of vanity. She was unaware of her own delicate and refined beauty. If Miss Kite could only see herself with his, the stranger's eyes, the modesty that rendered her distrustful of her natural charms would fall from her. The stranger was so sure of it Miss Kite determined to put it to the test. One evening, an hour before dinner, there entered the drawing-room, when the stranger only was there and before the gas was lighted, a pleasant, good-looking lady, somewhat pale, with neatly-arranged brown hair, who demanded of the stranger if he knew her. All her body was trembling, and her voice seemed inclined to run away from her and become a sob. But when the stranger, looking straight into her eyes, told her that from the likeness he thought she must be Miss Kite's younger sister, but much prettier, it became a laugh instead: and that evening the golden-haired Miss Kite disappeared never to show her highly-coloured face again; and what perhaps, more than all else, might have impressed some former habitue of Forty-eight Bloomsbury Square with awe, was that no one in the house made even a passing inquiry concerning her.

Sir William's cousin, the stranger thought an acquisition to any boarding-house. A lady of high-class family! There was nothing outward or visible perhaps to tell you that she was of high-class family. She herself, naturally, would not mention

the fact, yet somehow you felt it. Unconsciously she set a high-class tone, diffused an atmosphere of gentle manners. Not that the stranger had said this in so many words; Sir William's cousin gathered that he thought it, and felt herself in agreement with him.

For Mr. Longcord and his partner, as representatives of the best type of business men, the stranger had a great respect. With what unfortunate results to themselves has been noted. The curious thing is that the Firm appeared content with the price they had paid for the stranger's good opinion—had even, it was rumoured, acquired a taste for honest men's respect, that in the long run was likely to cost them dear. But we all have our pet extravagance.

The Colonel and Mrs. Devine both suffered a good deal at first from the necessity imposed upon them of learning, somewhat late in life, new tricks. In the privacy of their own apartment they consoled with one another.

"Tomfool nonsense," grumbled the Colonel, "you and I starting billing and cooing at our age!"

"What I object to," said Mrs. Devine, "is the feeling that somehow I am being made to do it."

"The idea that a man and his wife cannot have their little joke together for fear of what some impertinent jackanapes may think of them! it's damn ridiculous," the Colonel exploded.

"Even when he isn't there," said Mrs. Devine, "I seem to see him looking at me with those vexing eyes of his. Really the man quite haunts me."

"I have met him somewhere," mused the Colonel, "I'll swear I've met him somewhere. I wish to goodness he would go."

A hundred things a day the Colonel wanted to say to Mrs. Devine, a hundred things a day Mrs. Devine would have liked to observe to the Colonel. But by the time the opportunity occurred—when nobody else was by to hear—all interest in saying them was gone.

“ Women will be women,” was the sentiment with which the Colonel consoled himself. “ A man must bear with them—must never forget that he is a gentleman.”

“ Oh well, I suppose they’re all alike,” laughed Mrs. Devine to herself, having arrived at that stage of despair when one seeks refuge in cheerfulness. “ What’s the use of putting oneself out—it does no good, and only upsets one.”

There is a certain satisfaction in feeling you are bearing with heroic resignation the irritating follies of others. Colonel and Mrs. Devine came to enjoy the luxury of much self-approbation.

But the person seriously annoyed by the stranger’s bigoted belief in the innate goodness of everyone he came across was the languid, handsome Miss Devine. The stranger would have it that Miss Devine was a noble-souled, high-minded young woman, something midway between a Flora Macdonald and a Joan of Arc. Miss Devine, on the contrary, knew herself to be a sleek, luxury-loving animal, quite willing to sell herself to the bidder who could offer her the finest clothes, the richest foods, the most sumptuous surroundings. Such a bidder was to hand in the person of a retired bookmaker, a somewhat greasy old gentleman, but exceedingly rich and undoubtedly fond.

Miss Devine, having made up her mind that the thing had got to be done, was anxious that it should be done quickly. And here it was that the stranger's ridiculous opinion of her not only irritated but inconvenienced her. Under the very eyes of a person—however foolish—convinced you are possessed of all the highest attributes of your sex, it is difficult to behave as though actuated by only the basest motives. A dozen times had Miss Devine determined to end the matter by formal acceptance of her elderly admirer's large and flabby hand, and a dozen times—the vision intervening of the stranger's grave, believing eyes—had Miss Devine refused decided answer. The stranger would one day depart. Indeed, he had told her himself, he was but a passing traveller. When he was gone it would be easier. So she thought at the time.

One afternoon, the stranger entered the room where she was standing by the window, looking out upon the bare branches of the trees in Bloomsbury Square. She remembered afterwards, it was just such another foggy afternoon as the afternoon of the stranger's arrival three months before. No one else was in the room. The stranger closed the door, and came towards her with that curious, quick leaping step of his. His long coat was tightly buttoned, and in his hands he carried his old felt hat, and the massive knotted stick that was almost a staff.

"I have come to say good-bye," explained the stranger. "I am going."

"I shall not see you again?" asked the girl.

"I cannot say," replied the stranger. "But you will think of me?"

“ Yes,” she answered with a smile, “ I can promise that.”

“ And I shall always remember you,” promised the stranger, “ and I wish you every joy—the joy of love, the joy of a happy marriage.”

The girl winced. “ Love and marriage are not always the same thing,” she said.

“ Not always,” agreed the stranger, “ but in your case they will be one.”

She looked at him.

“ Do you think I have not noticed?” smiled the stranger, “ a gallant handsome lad, and clever. You love him and he loves you. I could not have gone away without knowing it was well with you.”

Her gaze wandered towards the fading light.

“ Ah yes, I love him,” she answered petulantly. “ Your eyes can see clearly enough, when they want to. But one does not live on love, in our world. I will tell you the man I am going to marry if you care to know.” She would not meet his eyes. She kept her gaze still fixed upon the dingy trees, the mist beyond, and spoke rapidly and vehemently: “ The man who can give me all my soul’s desire—money and the things that money can buy. You think me a woman, I’m only a pig. He is moist, and breathes like a porpoise; with cunning in place of a brain, and the rest of him mere stomach. But he is good enough for me.”

She hoped this would shock the stranger and that now, perhaps, he would go. It irritated her to hear him only laugh.

“ No,” he said, “ you will not marry him.”

“ Who will stop me?” she cried angrily.

“ Your Better Self.”

His voice had a strange ring of authority, compelling her to turn and look upon his face. Yes, it was true, the fancy that from the very first had haunted her. She had met him, talked to him—in silent country roads, in crowded city streets, where was it? And always in talking with him her spirit had been lifted up: she had been—what he had always thought her.

“ There are those,” continued the stranger, and for the first time she saw that he was of a noble presence, that his gentle, child-like eyes could also command, “ whose Better Self lies slain by their own hand and troubles them no more. But yours, my child, you have let grow too strong, it will ever be your master. You must obey. Flee from it and it will follow you; you cannot escape it. Insult it and it will chastise you with burning shame, with stinging self-reproach from day to day.” The sternness faded from the beautiful face, the tenderness crept back. He laid his hand upon the young girl’s shoulder. “ You will marry your lover,” he smiled. “ With him you will walk the way of sunlight and of shadow.”

And the girl, looking up into the strong calm face, knew that it would be so, that the power of resisting her Better Self had passed away from her for ever.

“ Now,” said the stranger, “ come to the door with me. Leave-takings are but wasted sadness. Let me pass out quietly. Close the door softly behind me.”

She thought that perhaps he would turn his face again, but she saw no more of him than the odd roundness of his back under the tightly buttoned coat. before he faded into the gathering fog.

Then softly she closed the door.



Sir Asutosh Mookerjee (1864-1924)

EXTRACTS FROM CONVOCATION ADDRESSES

I

There are two other fundamental ideas inseparably associated with the progress of the University which deserve a brief reference on the present occasion. When this University was established half a century ago, it was founded upon a policy of religious neutrality, and ever since then, our Regulations have wisely embodied an emphatic declaration that no question shall be asked at any University Examination which would require an expression of religious belief on the part of the candidates, and no exception shall be admissible against any answer, on the ground that it expresses peculiarities of religious belief. The wisdom of this policy has never been seriously questioned, but the result has been somewhat unexpected and has often been rightly lamented. A theory has gained ground for many years past that nothing need be taught in Schools and Colleges which is not directly required for purposes of University Examinations, and that consequently, it is no part of the duty of the Institutions in which our boys and youngmen are trained, to consider the question of their moral and religious instruction. It is however undeniable that, as His Excellency has so appropriately pointed out, no system of education which is purely intellectual and which leaves severely alone the moral and religious elements of life, can satisfy the national want or promote the growth of healthy manhood. If this University is to have a permanent hold upon the mind of

our people, this aspect of the problem will have to be faced and solved. I do not profess to have discovered a remedy, but I firmly believe that if the authorities of our Colleges and Schools earnestly take the matter in hand, a practical solution will be attainable. I do not deny that we are still at the threshold of the residential system of education, which was in times past our own indigenous system and which now prevails in European Universities, and, it may be, many a long year will pass, before the University will be in a position through its Colleges to exercise that domestic discipline over its students which is a valuable feature in the Universities of the West. But there is no reason why, meanwhile, moral and religious training should not be coincident with intellectual discipline. If this is fundamental to all real progress, as I firmly believe it to be, it is surely our duty to see that while our youths are forming their habits of body and mind, they are also forming their habits of moral and spiritual life, and that they are taught, not necessarily in the College, but simultaneously with their Collegiate lessons, to build on firm foundations their ethical conduct and their religious faith. I need hardly assert that as a pre-requisite to the success of any system which may be devised, it would be essential that every student, under the guidance of his guardian, should have absolute freedom to be trained in the religious faith of his fore-fathers; that, subject to this restriction, the idea is workable is illustrated by what has been accomplished in the Central Hindu College of Benares which is rightly regarded as one of the soundest and most remarkable Institutions founded in recent years. I have no faith in the efficacy of abstract religious maxims solemnly inculcated by grave

teachers upon youthful minds which receive no impression from the process. But I believe, it would be far more profitable to illustrate the fundamental principles of every system of morals and religion by examples of truth, purity, charity, humility, self-sacrifice, gratitude, reverence for the teacher, devotion to duty, womanly chastity, filial piety, loyalty to the King, and of other virtues, appropriately selected from the great national books of Hindus and Mahomedans. These cameos of character, these ideals of our past, portrayed with surpassing loveliness in the immortal writings of our poets and sages, would necessarily captivate the imagination and strengthen the moral fibre of our youngmen, who would thus acquire genuine respect for those principles of life and conduct which have guided in the past countless generations of noble men and women in this historic continent.

The other fundamental doctrine which lies at the root of our University system of education and to which I desire to make a brief reference, is the principle that European knowledge should be brought home to our students through the medium of English—that western light should reach us through western gates and not through lattice work in eastern windows. The validity of this principle, which has been firmly settled for three quarters of a century, has latterly been seriously questioned by people of culture and position whose opinion claims consideration. I need not on the present occasion, after what His Excellency has said, review the history of the educational problem of this country during the early part of the last century, nor have I the time at my disposal to recall to your minds how before the First Educational Despatch of 1813, the question of the education of

our people was treated with indifference by our Rulers, although the Calcutta Madrassa had been established by Warren Hastings for the benefit of Arabic studies and the Sanskrit College at Benares had been founded by Jonathan Duncan for the promotion of Sanskrit learning. Nor need I dwell at length upon the strange circumstance, which has always seemed to me to be an irony of fate, that while from 1813 onwards the authorities were bent upon the improvement of Indian education by the encouragement of persons learned in Sanskrit and Arabic, distinguished members of the Indian Aristocracy, under the inspiration of David Hare and Ram Mohan Ray, founded the Hindu College, on the principle, that whoever desires to obtain a liberal education, must begin by a mastery of the English language as a key to the Science and Literature of Europe. It is enough for me to remind you that nearly twenty years after the foundation of the Hindu College by my countrymen, the struggle between what has been not very felicitously described as Anglicism and Orientalism, terminated in favour of the former, and the great Minute of Lord Macaulay and the famous Resolution of Lord William Bentinck, set the seal of authoritative approval upon the principle, unsuccessfully advocated by Raja Ram Mohan Ray and Dr. Alexander Duff, that a thorough first-hand acquaintance with English language and literature will always be essential to those amongst my countrymen who aspire to a high order of education. This principle, thus broadly formulated, was definitely adopted as the foundation of the great Educational Despatch of 1854 in which, as Lord Dalhousie once remarked, Sir Charles Wood, with magnificent audacity, outlined a scheme of education for all

India, far wider and more comprehensive than any Local or the Supreme Government would ever have ventured to suggest. That Despatch is still rightly treated as the Great Charter of high education in India, and I confess, I cannot perceive any solid foundation for the assertion that high education, as outlined in that Despatch, has been a perilous blunder. I emphatically assert, that it has been neither a peril nor a blunder. I can never forget the circumstances under which the Indian Universities were established. What friend of education in this country can afford to forget that although the Court of Directors, with genuine statesman-like foresight, recognised that England's prime function in India was to superintend the tranquil elevation of the whole moral and intellectual standard, and directed, at a time of profound peace, the establishment of the Universities, the Acts of the Legislature, by which the Universities were called into existence, were not passed till the year of the great Mutiny, when the flames of rebellion were still unquenched and the times might have been deemed scarcely suited to educational advancement? Who can deny that the Universities, founded upon just and liberal principles, under such circumstances and amid such surroundings, will for ever remain as striking monuments of the coolness, the persistent energy and the generous impulses of the British race? Can it then be suggested with any semblance of reason that the Universities so generously established, have failed in their object of the dissemination of European education amongst our people? I have no hesitation that the answer should be an emphatic negative. If the mission of the British nation is not merely the maintenance of order but also the

advancement of civilization, an organised system of high education is essential, because progress of civilization without promotion of education is a contradiction in terms. As was felicitously observed by one of my distinguished predecessors, who resolutely declined to be frightened by any talk about the dangers of education, it is ignorance in every form and in every class, which is a source of danger to the body politic, and the strength and stability of a government must depend, not solely upon force, but upon reason, upon persuasion, and upon the intelligent appreciation by its subjects of the motives and objects of their Rulers. It is undeniable that the spread of higher education amongst our people has been on the whole beneficent in the direction indicated by Sir Courtenay Ilbert; but higher European education promises to the people of this country a great deal more, if it is wisely regulated and is supplemented by moral and religious culture, so as to foster the growth of whatever is noble in Indian character. Nearly forty years ago, Baron Napier, Governor of Madras and Chancellor of the University of that Province, in a memorable address, remarkable for prophetic insight and true statesmanship, analysed and delineated with the hand of a master, the aims and ends to which higher European education will ultimately lead the people of this country. His Excellency specified four objects which the people of this country seemed eventually destined to attain by sedulously following the paths of education; *first*, a new basis of national unity, *second*, a rational knowledge of the Institutions of the East, *third*, self-government or the government of India by the Indians in a modified form, and *fourth*, participation in the general intellectual movement of the world,

now and hereafter. Countless years, the end of which no human vision can reach, nor sagacity penetrate, may roll on before any or all of these objects are realised. But if ever the time comes, when in the language of Lord Napier, "the Universities of India prove to have done a larger duty than they have exercised elsewhere, and are found to have been not only the nursing mothers of learning and virtue and intellectual delights, but also the nursing mother of a new Commonwealth," the foundation of the Universities in the East will prove to have been the brightest glory of the British race and the supremest triumph of statesmanship. It is meet, therefore, that we should commemorate the Jubilee of this University which has brought home to our people the gladsome light of western education in the past and which is fraught with magnificent possibilities in the future, and it befits the occasion that we should inscribe on the roll of our graduates the name of the distinguished scientist from Europe who has honoured us by his presence, the names of eminent representatives of the other Indian Universities which are inseparably associated with us by a community of ideals and aspirations, and the names as well of our own faithful workers who have spread the fair fame of the University by their devotion to the cause of advancement of knowledge and promotion of true learning.

Graduates of the University of Calcutta, who have this day been invested with academic insignia, I call upon you to rise to the true dignity of the position which you have just attained and to recognise and fulfil the responsibility which it imposes. Do not imagine that the charge which I have addressed to every one of you on admission to your respective

Degree, that you should in your life and conversation show yourself worthy of the same, is a meaningless platitude or an idle formula. Treat it as the parting message of the University to each and every one of you who have been trained, and I trust, adequately equipped for the battle of life, under her beneficent guidance. If I were called upon to develop this charge, I would exhort you in the words of one of the greatest teachers of mankind: "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things." In whatever sphere of life your lot may be cast, prove yourself to be the true children of your Alma Mater. Educated by the liberality of the State or by private munificence, strive strenuously to make adequate return; with anxious solicitude, promote the education of your countrymen, and be, each of you, a bright centre of moral and intellectual activity like the scholars of Mediæval Europe, who laden with Greek and Roman learning, brought many of the gems of ancient lore within the reach of those who never had the benefits of classical education and knew none but the vulgar tongue. Make your mission the diffusion of knowledge and virtue and the repression of ignorance and evil. Above all, endeavour to attain stability of character and cultivate that principle of honour, which once tainted or lost can never be regained. Forget not, that unless you are honourable men, all your talent, learning and industry will be in vain, and your intellectual powers will be a snare to yourselves and a delusion to others. Cultivate that humility of spirit which the learned and unlearned

alike instinctively feel is the true stamp of culture and wisdom. Cultivate also that spirit of obedience to lawful authority, which is the necessary concomitant of true academic discipline. Make yourselves Captains of the Peace of the Realm and prove yourselves loyal and valuable citizens, worthy of the confidence alike of your Rulers and of your countrymen. Show to the world, that education and loyalty are not only consistent, but that the more advanced the education, the more genuine the culture, the deeper the attachment to your Rulers. Prove to the world that genuine allegiance is felt by you for the nation, which by a liberal and enlightened educational policy, have brought your minds into intimate contact with the spirit of the West, and show that such allegiance may be rendered without the least relinquishment of your own nationality and without loss of genuine pride in the magnificent legacy of your ancient civilization.

Students of this University, allow not the pursuit of your studies to be disturbed by extra-academic elements. Forget not that the normal task of the student, so long as he is a student, is not to make politics, nor to be conspicuous in political life. Take it as my deepest conviction, that practical politics is the business of men, not of boys. You have not that prudent firmness, that ripe experience, that soundness of judgment in human affairs, which is essential in politics, and will be attained by you only in the battle of life, in the professions and in responsible positions. Train yourselves, if you please, in Political Economy, Political Philosophy, Jurisprudence and Constitutional Law ; acquire an intelligent comprehension of the great lessons of History ; but delude not yourselves in your youthful enthusiasm that the complex machinery by

which a State is governed may be usefully criticised and discussed without adequate training and laborious preparation. Remember further that if you affiliate yourselves with a party, you deprive yourselves of that academic freedom which is a pré-requisite to self-education and culture. Submit not, I implore you, to intellectual slavery, and abandon not your most priceless possession, to test, to doubt, to see everything with your own eyes. Take this as a solemn warning that you cannot with impunity and without serious risk to your mental health, allow your academic pursuits to be rudely disturbed by the shocks of political life. Devote yourselves, therefore, to the quiet and steady acquisition of physical, intellectual and moral habits, and take to your hearts the motto,

“ Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.”

Follow the path of virtue, which knows no distinction of country or colour; be remarkable for your integrity as for your learning, and let the world see that there are amongst you

“ Souls tempered with fire,
Fervent, heroic and good—
Helpers and Friends of mankind.”

EXTRACTS FROM CONVOCATION SPEECHES

II

I make no doubt that the members of this University will understand me, will feel with me, if I state that the present occasion is to me a moving one I may say, a solemn one. I have addressed as Vice-Chancellor seven ordinary Convocations before this day. It is now eight years ago that the confidence of the Government of India summoned me to the place and dignity which I shall now relinquish in a few days. Eight years is a long span of time, and as time is most truly measured by the amount of work that may have been achieved or attempted within it, these last eight years really mean for me a much longer period. For, although I may sincerely assert that, from a very early stage, my life has been an exceptionally laborious one, the period during which I have presided over this University has made vastly greater claims on my energy and strength than any previous period of the same duration. I need not point out to you that the duties of my permanent judicial office are unavoidably and unremittently heavy; nor need I refer to all those minor—but, in their aggregate, by no means slight—calls on my time and working power, which a man in a certain rank and station cannot decline. Nor need I dwell on the fact that the duties of the Vice-Chancellor of one of the great Indian Universities are not exactly light or unimportant, under any circumstances; even the routine work of an uneventful period consumes much time, and demands a good deal of patience, if nothing more; and I believe no Vice-Chancellor has ever passed, even through one of the normal terms of office, without an

occasional call to grapple with business of grave import and high responsibility. But, in my case, the period of office has not only been unusually long, but it has imposed upon the business head of the University, an absolutely unprecedented burden of toil and responsibility. No doubt, I entered on my University work with a clear discernment of what in general awaited me. I assumed office at a time when, after a strenuous and protracted effort, the Senate had failed to complete the New Regulations required to be framed by the Indian Universities Act, and the first duty devolving upon me was to preside over the deliberations of a Special Committee appointed to frame a complete body of New Regulations for promulgation by the Government of India. The task was onerous in the extreme, notwithstanding the valuable drafts prepared by the Senate as the result of many months of deliberation and in spite of generous assistance of able and experienced colleagues. The next urgent task—a task infinitely more trying than the one first accomplished—was actually to reshape the life and working of the University, on the basis of what had been settled in theory. The task was one to make even the most courageous and ambitious aspirant to the dignity of Vice-Chancellorship pause and consider. The general aims to be worked for, no doubt, were indicated with sufficient clearness by the Indian Universities Act and by the New Regulations framed in accordance therewith. But masses of details—the order of work, the constitution of new agencies, the modes of procedure and other like matters—had to be determined independently, and it was manifest that the true practical difficulties would reveal themselves only in the course of operations.

It would be difficult, hardly possible, in fact, to characterise in one brief sentence all the demands the Indian Universities Act made on the Universities—thorough re-organisation, reform, revolution, each of these terms would, in a way, be justified, but would express one aspect only. But I was sanguine and cheerful at the time: I appreciated the honour of the call to the helm of affairs at so critical a period, and it had always been my ambition to be allowed to do something—something great as I flattered myself in my youthful dreams—for the good and the glory of my Alma Mater. The thought that the opportunity had come delighted me; my imagination was fascinated by the picture of all that might be accomplished, and the idea of great obstacles to be overcome only heightened my energy. I accepted office.—And then, indeed, there began for me a time of great toil and trouble! Do not, I pray, tax me with undue egotism, if in this part of my address I so frequently have to refer to *myself*, to *my* work, to *my* troubles. My labours and my troubles have been shared by many, and I rejoice in the opportunity now afforded to me to give emphatic public expression to the sincere gratitude I owe to all those individuals or corporate entities—who in the course of the last eight years have co-operated with me so strenuously, willingly sacrificing leisure and convenience. Greatest of all is my debt to that Body which, although not ultimately responsible for the policy of the University, yet shares with the Vice-Chancellor the high responsibility of initiating all important new measures, I mean the Syndicate. Throughout these eight years, with the sole exception of a few weeks' holidays, there has been a long Syndicate meeting on

every Saturday—not to mention numerous extra meetings—and on no occasion were we compelled to adjourn owing to the absence of a quorum. Indeed, I have ample reason to felicitate myself on the help of colleagues so nobly, so generously responding to the often rather merciless claims I had to make on them. My debt to them is immense. At the same time, it is a fact that in all the more important branches of University work, the Vice-Chancellor himself necessarily has to exercise two functions to which the highest responsibility attaches—he has to introduce new important measures, and he has to guide the Syndicate to profitable and if possible unanimous resolutions to be laid before the Senate. These duties are not light ones, even in calm and non-controversial periods, but they become grave, nay formidable, in times of storm and stress, when circumstances demand vital changes and drastic measures, and you all know that such were the circumstances during the last eight years. Reforms of the most incisive kind had to be carried through in every department of University life; demands formerly unheard of had to be made on all who claimed privileges in connection with the University. The mere routine labour to which all this gave rise was, I may truly say, enormous; but what was much more burdensome was the anxiety, the mental distress, unavoidably caused by business of this description. I do not so much mean apprehension and anxiety as to the success of new measures proposed; what I have in my mind rather is the necessity under which the advocate of revolutionary steps sees himself to challenge opposition, to hurt the feelings, possibly of the best of friends, to incur the risk of having his

motives and aims misconceived and misinterpreted, to attack what are called vested rights and traditional privileges. All this distress, all this bitterness, we the working members of this University have tasted in full measure. The last eight years, in truth, have been years of unremittent struggle; difficulties and obstacles kept springing up like the heads of the Hydra, each head armed with sharp and often venomous fangs. A late lamented member of the Syndicate once very aptly alluded to the toil of the Syndicate and the Vice-Chancellor as truly Herculean. Of myself, I may say with good conscience that if often I have not spared others, I have never spared myself. For years now, every hour, every minute I could spare from other unavoidable duties—foremost amongst them the duties of my judicial office—has been devoted by me to University work. Plans and schemes to heighten the efficiency of the University have been the subject of my day dreams into which even a busy man lapses from time to time; they have haunted me in the hours of nightly rest. To University concerns, I have sacrificed all chances of study and research, possibly, to some extent, the interests of family and friends, and certainly, I regret to say, a good part of my health and vitality. Do not imagine, however, that I repine at the sacrifices made. I have had my reward in many ways. I need not remind you that great comfort springs from the consciousness of rectitude of purpose, from the conviction that the cause to which one devotes all his strength and for which one renounces the ordinary delights of life, is a high and sacred one. But, in addition, I have enjoyed many bright moments of a more definite character. I have been cheered by

expressions of confidence and approbation on the part of successive Chancellors and Rectors, by the sympathy and applause of friends, by a long continued series of successes, and even the constant toil and strife have not been devoid of inspiriting effect, for, as you know, there is such a feeling as the 'joy of battle.' Much of those successes was of a merely transient nature, but much also persist, may claim to be called permanent, nay imperishable. For it would be false modesty on my part, now that I am about to vacate the office of Vice-Chancellor, not to acknowledge that during my term it was given to the Senate, to the Syndicate and to myself, to render to our University services the greatness of which cannot be disputed. I confess to a feeling of high pride when my thought dwells on what has been accomplished within the last eight years. I will not detain you with anything like a complete enumeration of details and will say nothing as to all those measures, highly important as they were, which aimed at no more than the reform and improvement of existing agencies and institutions. A higher feeling of pride and satisfaction naturally connects itself with the thought that a considerable portion of what we have accomplished may be designated as a new creation, that we have planned and carried out what had previously hardly been imagined and certainly not attempted either here or in any other Indian University. It is no slight thing to have initiated, at any rate, a comprehensive scheme for the satisfactory housing and the superintendence of the entire student population, a scheme, the fulfilment of which has been unhappily retarded by the lack of needful funds. It is no slight thing to have effected a total reform of legal education in

Bengal and to have built up a noble University Law College, where instruction in Law is imparted to hundreds of students on a plan infinitely more methodical and comprehensive than anything in the same line ever dreamt of in India. It is a great thing to have found means to open once more, to the gain and benefit of our University, the sources of private liberality which for so many years seemed to have run completely dry. And—here I must confess to a feeling of quite peculiar quality and intensity in which there are blended proud delight, reverential gratitude to divine Providence, a deep sense of obligation to all our kind helpers from Government downwards—it is a truly great thing to have contributed towards that great widening and raising of the functions of our University which has accomplished itself within the last three years, to have assisted at the birth of the *Teaching University* of Calcutta. As to the history of this great, this epoch-making movement, I need not add anything to what I have said in an earlier part of this address. I realise to the fullest extent how far we are as yet from the complete establishment of those Teaching Faculties which our Gracious King-Emperor, in his reply to our loyal address, pointed out as constituting the most urgent need of our University; but I think we are entitled to feel largely satisfied with the beginning we have made. The gathering of the highest section of our present teaching staff was indeed a laborious and delicate task, but our labours have not been without an ample measure of reward. I rejoice to see the Chair of Mental and Moral Philosophy, called after our Gracious Sovereign, filled by my distinguished friend Dr. Brajendranath Seal, who, we all hope, will

now find the long desired leisure to give its final form to the great Synthetic System of Thought which he has been silently elaborating during so many years. It fills me with special pride that in Dr. William Henry Young, we have a Hardinge Professor of Mathematics of the very highest eminence, one of the great leaders in the domain of modern mathematical speculation. It is a source of infinite satisfaction to me that we have been able to engage for the Chair of Ancient Indian History and Culture, associated with the name of His Excellency the Governor, the services of Dr. George Thibaut, a man in whose mind study and reading of the widest extent and continued during a life time, have matured the golden fruit of wisdom, and who is fitted, as few indeed are, to do full justice to all the aspects and phases of Indian life and Indian intellectual development throughout the ages. I congratulate myself and the University on our having prevailed on a man so intimately associated with the development of higher education in Calcutta and so justly revered and loved by many, as Professor Henry Stephen, to undertake the teaching of English Literature in our M.A. Classes, with the collaboration of Professor Robert Knox, a distinguished alumnus of the University of Oxford. I welcome in Professor Hamilton and Professor Strauss worthy representatives of modern English economic thought on the one hand, of the great philological schools of Germany on the other hand. I note with special delight that in the ranks of our M.A. Lecturers also, there are men so distinguished for powers of original thought as Dr. Syamadas Mookerjee and Dr. Hiralal Haldar, to mention two only of the most brilliant names. I think with pride and deep satisfaction of the new University

College of Science, the foundation stone of which it was given to us to lay yesterday, and of the highly competent staff of teachers and investigators who before long will be congregated there,—foremost among them Dr. Prafullachandra Ray, of whom Calcutta, Bengal and India are so justly proud. In addition to all these teachers, permanently attached to us, I recall to your minds the series of European scholars of the highest distinction, who, as Readers of the University, have delivered to our students special courses of lectures—Dr. Felix Schuster, Dr. Gilbert Walker, Dr. Hermann Oldenberg, Dr. Hermann Jacobi, Dr. Paul Vinogradoff and others—the lectures of all of whom have been or will shortly be published by our University. Nor must I forget our Indian Readers and lectures like those delivered by Babu Dineschandra Sen on the History of Bengali Literature, which also mark an epoch in their way. I may further recall to your mind the series of excellent theses written in recent years by Graduates of the University for the Degree of Doctor in the several Faculties, for the Jubilee Research Prize and for the Griffith Memorial Prize. Truly, the signs of the awakening of higher intellectual and scholarly ambitions among our students are not absent; a new spirit is abroad amongst us also. It is evident to me that the educated section of my countrymen is convinced that new intellectual agencies, new organisations for the advance of knowledge, learning and reasearch are an imperious need of the times, that they are satisfied that the University of Calcutta should be the leader in the new movement, and that what so far we have accomplished has their approval and has inspired them with that confidence in our powers and good will which

we require for our further advance. I repeat, the thought of all this is a deep comfort to my soul.

The joy and pride to which I confess are not, however, all unmixed. I too vividly remember, I too intensely feel the after-effects of all the struggles we had to pass through before the accomplishment of our aims, not to feel at times seriously anxious as to the future of what I may call the New University. Though much has been done, more remains to be done, and who knows what the future may bring. I at times truly feel like the careworn toiler of the soil, when, on fields first brought under the plough by him, he at last sees the earliest tender green shoots issue from the ground. He dwells in remembrance on the long series of hard labours he had to undergo in order to carry things so far—the felling of trees, the digging out of stubborn roots and stones, the draining of marshy soil, the clearing of obstructive weeds, and then finally the toils of ploughing and sowing. Now, at last, the first fruits of all this labour begin to show themselves, refreshing his eyes and gladdening his heart. But yet how much may not intervene before full fruition is obtained, before, from the delicate emerald shoots there have risen the serried ranks of rigid ears, each of them proudly balancing at the top its little treasury of golden grains, and, again, how much may not happen before all those precious grains have been safely gathered and stored in barns, ready to supply wholesome food for the cultivator, for his family, for his tribe. Untimely drought may wither the young stalks, storms and rain may beat down the ears, fierce hail may lacerate them, noxious insects may destroy the ripening grain. The cultivator has done his best ;

he now stands help'less; nothing is left to him, but to hope, to pray and to trust. I repeat, I at times feel like that toiler of the fields.

I too, or let me rather say, we too—I and my helpers—have worked in the sweat of our brows, have spent laborious days and anxious nights; we too have hoped for a glorious harvest, a harvest not palpable but not the less real on that account, a harvest in the fields of the spirit and the intellect, supplying nourishment which a great people needs, no less than wholesome material bread, pure water, a pure atmosphere. We have prepared the ground and now see the first fruit of our labours. But here also how much may not happen to prevent the full ripening of the harvest. I must admit that when I recall to memory all the difficulties it gave us such heavy trouble to overcome, and when I picture to myself in my imagination all the difficulties that may beset the future path of the University, I have moments of deep anxiety. The steady opposition which we had to face is not yet crushed,—and it is all the more dangerous when it chooses to move in the dark. Sympathy has failed us in quarters where we had a right to demand it, and where we confidently reckoned on it. But more even than well defined opposition and clearly declared want of sympathy, I dread want of fortitude and energy on the part of those who at the bottom view our efforts with approbation, I dread that pusillanimity which shrinks at the first rough collision with determined hostility, that cowardly spirit of compromise which so often induces the weak man to accept a fraction of the reward for which he has hitherto contended, while one resolute step in advance, one bold thrust of the arm, might have secured for him

the whole glorious prize. All these dangers I vividly realise, and hence my feelings are sometimes not unlike those of the husbandman when he sees dark clouds massing on the horizon and hears the muffled sound of distant thunder. To me also, nothing is left but to hope, to pray, to trust.

But far be it from me to close this address of mine on a note of fear and despondency. The spectres of doubt and apprehension which at times crowd round the bravest even, vanish into nothingness when faced with resolution. When all is said and done, there is alive in the depths of my soul the unshakable conviction that I and my helpers have, during these last years, fought a good fight; that the light, which has kept beckoning us onward on our rough and dark path was not the fitful gleam of a will-o'-the-wisp, but the steady radiance of a pure and holy flame for ever burning in a glorious temple however far remote—a shrine dedicated to the worship of Truth and the Ideal. Let us, therefore, advance, the banner of progress in hand, with bold but not unwary steps, drawing confidence and inspiration from the consciousness that so many of the best and truest men of our people are in full sympathy with us; that the rising generation has availed itself with eagerness, nay enthusiasm, of the new opportunities we have created for higher studies; that the sparks of the new inextinguishable fire kindled in our midst have already leapt to all parts of India, and that the Sister Universities are eager to imitate and emulate what we have boldly initiated. I feel that a mighty new spirit has been aroused, a spirit that will not be quenched; and this conviction, indeed, is a deep comfort to me at the moment when I take leave from work dear to

me for so many weighty reasons. The workers pass away; the solid results of their work remain and fructify. I thus bid farewell to office and fellow workers, not without anxiety for the future of my University; but yet with a great measure of inward contentment: and—let this be my last word—from the depths of my soul, there rises a fervent prayer for the perennial welfare of our Alma Mater—for whom it was given to me to do much work and suffer to some extent—and of that greater parental divinity to whom even our great University is a mere hand-maiden as it were—my beloved Motherland.

H. I. M. King George V (born 3rd June, 1865)

Grand view
A PANORAMA OF INDIA *

AT GUILDHALL (17TH MAY, 1906)

The seven months' absence has been to us a happy and interesting experience. Still, we rejoice to be at home again, and are thankful to God that He has spared us to return to our children and to those that are dear to us. It is nearly five years ago that the Princess of Wales and I were entertained by the Lord Mayor and the City of London in this ancient hall on the termination of our memorable tour to our sister nations beyond the seas. We are met here to-day under similar circumstances, and the conclusion of our visit to the great Indian Empire may, I think, be regarded as the completion of the mission originally entrusted to us by the King. It is a great satisfaction to us that we have been privileged to visit nearly every part of the British Empire. In thus accomplishing what has been the ambition of our lives, the Princess and I desire to express our sincere gratitude to the country for having enabled us to make this long voyage in such a fine vessel as the *Renown*. No less warmly do we thank the Government of India for the admirable arrangements for our railway journeys of nearly nine thousand

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miles, which were made with every possible consideration for our convenience and safety. It may, perhaps, interest you to know that we spent twenty-eight nights in our comfortable train. From the 9th of November, the day of our brilliant reception on landing at Bombay, until the moment of our departure from Karachi on the 19th of March, we were welcomed everywhere with a display of enthusiasm and affection which profoundly touched us, and the memory of which will never fade from our minds. We were still more impressed by the unmistakable proofs of genuine devotion and personal attachment to the King-Emperor. At every place we visited where my dear father had been thirty years ago, the event was spoken of with the keenest interest and pride, not only by those who remember seeing him, but also by the younger generation.

Although we were welcomed everywhere by happy, holiday-making crowds which thronged the gaily-decorated streets, we did not forget the misery and poverty which, alas! existed in certain districts afflicted by famine through which we passed. When at Gwalior, I had the opportunity of inspecting a famine camp, and saw with sad interest, but with satisfaction, the excellent arrangements effectively carried out for mitigating the sufferings of upwards of 6,000 men, women, and children, who were there employed, fed, and cared for.

Our visits to several of the great Feudatory States will always be reckoned among the happiest and most interesting of our experiences. We were received by the respective rulers and their peoples with the warmest enthusiasm, with all the gorgeousness and circumstance of old Indian customs, and by them entertained

with magnificent hospitality. I enjoyed social intercourse with many of these great Princes, and I was impressed with their loyalty and personal allegiance to the Crown, their nobility of mind, their chivalrous nature, and the great powers which they possess for doing good. I might mention that in several of these States the Imperial Service troops are an important feature. They are raised, equipped, and maintained by the Princes themselves, to be placed at our disposal in case of war. Though these States supply their own officers, these regiments are under the guidance and inspection of British Officers; and it is to be hoped that this excellent movement may be extended throughout all the Feudatory States.

No one could possibly fail to be struck with the wonderful administration of India. Time did not permit of our leaving the beaten track for the interior of the country, and thereby gaining an insight into the machinery of that most efficient organisation, the Government of a district. But we had opportunities of seeing at the headquarters of the Presidencies and of the different Provinces the general and admirable working of the Civil Service. At the same time, we realised that it is a mere handful of highly-educated British officials, often living a hard and strenuous life, frequently separated from their fellow-countrymen, and subject to the trials and discomforts of the plains, who were working hand-in-hand with representatives of the different races in the administration of enormous areas, in the government of millions of people.

During the month of December, in the neighbourhood of Rawal Pindi, I had the pleasure of staying with Lord Kitchener in his camp of manoeuvres, and witnessed operations on an extended scale between

two armies numbering in all over 55,000 men, terminating in a review and march past of the largest force ever brought together in India in time of peace. I was struck with the general fitness and the splendid appearance of the British troops, with the physique and power of endurance of the Native Army, and the dash of its cavalry, while throughout the army I found an earnest desire for increased efficiency and for readiness to take the field. I was specially glad to have this opportunity of being associated with our magnificent army in India under such practical conditions. I am proud to say that during my tour I was able to inspect 143,000 troops.

Having seen several colleges and other educational institutions in different parts of India, I gained some slight idea of the efforts that are being made to place within the reach of all classes a liberal education. Let me take as an example the great Mohammedan college and school at Aligarh, which is supported and controlled by the private enterprise of Mohammedan gentlemen from all parts of India. A residential system similar to that at Oxford and Cambridge has been adopted. At the same time athletics are not neglected, and in all schools and colleges there is much emulation in cricket and football. Undoubtedly, such institutions must materially affect the formation of character in future generations.

If I were asked to name any general impressions which I have formed during this exceptional but all too short experience, they would be that I have learnt to appreciate the fact that India cannot be regarded as one country. We talk casually of going to India. But the majority of us, perhaps, do not realise that it is a continent with an area equal to the whole of

Europe, without Russia, containing a population of 300,000,000 of diverse races, languages, and creeds, and many different grades of civilisation. I was struck with its immense size, its splendour, its numerous races, its varied climate, its snow-capped mountains, its boundless deserts, its mighty rivers, its architectural monuments, and its ancient traditions. I have realised the patience, the simplicity of life, the loyal devotion, and the religious spirit which characterises the Indian peoples. I know also their faith in the absolute justice and integrity of our rule.

I cannot help thinking from all I have heard and seen that the task of governing India will be made the easier if we, on our part, infuse into it a wider element of sympathy. I will venture to predict that to such sympathy there will be an ever-abundant and genuine response. May we not also hope for a still fuller measure of trust and confidence in our earnest desire and efforts to promote the well-being, and to further the best interests, of every class?

In speaking of my impressions, I should like very briefly to record a few of those scenes and incidents which will be to us of lasting value. Would that I were able in any way to picture our arrival in Bombay, amid the greetings and hearty acclamations of its cosmopolitan population, dressed in every conceivable colour, and all beneath the clearest blue of an Eastern sky. Quitting Bombay in tropical heat, my thoughts carry me from there over hundreds of miles, almost as far as from London to Constantinople, to the rigorous climate of the Khyber Pass. The Union Jack, floating over the fortress of Jamrud, reminds us that British protection is guaranteed to the caravans that

pass twice a week to and from Afghanistan, throughout this twenty-five miles of neutral territory. At Lunda Kotal, the further entrance of the Pass, five British officers and a regiment of Afridis—that tribe which only a few years ago was fighting against us—now garrison this lonely outpost to our Indian Empire. To the historic stronghold of Ali Musjid came the leading Khans, each bringing offerings of good will in the shape of the pick of their flocks of sheep, and the finest specimens of their honey.

Contrast such wild and semi-civilised scenes with Delhi and Agra, those centres of artistic wealth and of priceless architectural monuments, for the preservation of which, and the great care bestowed upon them, universal thanks are due to the late Viceroy, Lord Curzon. Imagine us next at Gwalior and later on at Benares, making our public entry under conditions impossible in any other part of the world, mounted as we were on elephants, gorgeously caparisoned, and passing amid escorts and troops clothed and equipped in all the picturesqueness of mediæval pageantry. But, among all these varied and striking impressions, none have stirred our hearts as did the Ridge at Delhi, and the grounds and ruins of the Lucknow Residency. They recalled with vivid reality those glorious heroes and those thrilling deeds which will for ever make sacred the story of the Indian Mutiny. I think you will be interested to know that Colonel Bonham, one of the few survivors of the siege of Lucknow, is present here among us to-day. Although he was wounded three times during the siege, I am glad to say he is still fit and well, and was good enough to act as our guide when we were at Lucknow in December last.

The New Year saw us in Calcutta, the capital of India, and the second largest city of the British Empire, where our reception was most cordial and sympathetic. Here I had the satisfaction of laying the foundation-stone of the Queen Victoria Memorial Hall, a great and national memorial, the inception of which is chiefly due to Lord Curzon, to be a treasure-house of relics and records of the life and reign of our late beloved Sovereign, whose memory is held in loving veneration by every race throughout the Continent of India. If time permitted, I should like to dwell upon Burma, so different, as it is, from India in the nature of its people and in its social characteristics ; to speak of the famous golden pagoda at Rangoon, of the interesting sights at Mandalay, and of three delightful days spent on the great River Irrawaddy. Let us change the scene to Madras and its historic associations, so closely connected with the foundation of our Indian Empire. Let us pass thence through the hot plains of Southern India, journeying northwards through Benares, the metropolis of Hinduism, with its sacred river and famous shrines, until at length we re-enter the region of frost and snows at Quetta, with its outpost at Chaman, another gateway in that wild and mountainous district which constitutes our north-west frontier of India. Leaving Quetta, we retrace our steps through that triumph of engineering skill, the railroad through the Bolan Pass ; and, descending from an altitude of 5,500 feet, we pass through the burning plains of Sind and reach Karachi, the rapidly growing port of that province. And here we bid farewell to the country, where for many months we had found a second home and for whose people we shall preserve a lasting affection.

But these are mere first impressions. I am fully aware how impossible it is to gain accurate and intimate knowledge of so vast a country by a visit of only four and a half months. Yet I would strongly suggest to those who are interested in the great questions which surround the India of to-day to go there and learn as much as is possible by personal observation on the spot. I cannot but think that every Briton who treads the soil of India is assisting towards a better understanding with the Mother Country, helping to break down prejudice, to dispel misapprehension, and to foster sympathy and brotherhood. Thus he will not only strengthen the old ties, but create new ones, and so, please God secure a better understanding and a closer union of hearts between the Mother Country and her Indian Empire.

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Viscount Bryce (born 1888)

SOME HINTS ON READING*

*Address to the Students of Rutgers (formerly
Queen's) College, New Jersey, October, 1911.*

It has been often said that books do for us to-day what universities did in earlier ages. The knowledge that could five centuries ago have been obtained only from the lips of a teacher, can now be gathered from the printed page. Nevertheless, since it is only the most active and most diligent and most discerning minds that can dispense with the help and guidance of teachers to show them what to read and how to read, universities and colleges are scarcely less useful if not quite so indispensable to-day as they were before the invention of printing. It is, therefore, not unfitting that in your college I should be asked to talk to you about books, the way to choose them, and the way to draw most profit from them. The very abundance of books in our days—a stupefying and terrifying abundance—has made it more important to know how to choose promptly and judiciously among them if one is not to spend as much time in the mere choice as in the use. Here you have the help of your professors. But here you are only beginning the process of education which will go on during

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the rest of your life. By far the largest part of that process will, after you have left college, consist in your independent reading, so the sooner you form habits of choice and methods of use, the better.

The first piece of advice I will venture to give you is this. Read only the best books. There are plenty of them, far more than will ever find time to read, and when they are to be had it is a pity to waste time on any others.

You may ask what I mean by the Best books. Passing by for the moment those which in each of the great world-languages we call its classics, for to these we shall return presently, I mean by the Best those from which you receive most, and can carry most away, in the form either of knowledge or of stimulation. When you want to learn something about a subject, do not fall upon the first book which you have heard named or which professes by its title to deal with that subject. Consult your teacher, or any well-read friend, or the librarian of the nearest public library. (One of the greatest services public libraries render is that they provide librarians usually competent, and I believe always willing, to advise those who apply to them.) Be content with nothing less than the very best you can get. Time will be saved in the end.

There is no waste more pitiable than that so often seen when some zealous student has, for want of guidance, spent weeks or months of toil in trying to obtain from a second or third-rate book what he might have found sooner and better in a first-rate one. So try to read only what is good. And by "good" you will not suppose me to mean what used to be called "improving books," books written in a sort

of Sunday School spirit for the moral benefit of the reader. A book may be excellent in its ethical tone, and full of solid information, and yet be unprofitable, that is to say, dull, heavy, uninspiring, wearisome. Contrariwise, a book is good when it is bright and fresh, when it rouses and enlivens the mind, when it provides materials on which the mind can pleasurably work, when it leaves the reader not only knowing more but better able to use the knowledge he has received from it.

Seventy years ago people, or at least those who used then to be called the preceptors of youth, talked as if there lay a certain virtue in dry books, or at any rate a moral merit in the process of plodding through them. It was a dismal mistake, which inflicted upon youth many a dreary hour. The dull book is not better than the lively book. Other things being equal, it is worse, because it requires more expenditure of effort to master such of its contents as are worth remembering. If the edge of the tool is blunt, one must put forth more strength, and as there is never too much strength, none of it should be wasted. It may be asked, "But is not the mental discipline wholesome?" Yes, effort crowned with victory is a fine thing, but since there is plenty of such discipline to be had from the better books why go to the worse books for it?

Sometimes it happens that what you want to learn cannot be had except from dry or even from dull treatises. Dryness and dulness are not the same thing, for the former quality may be due to the nature of the subject, but the latter is the fault of the author. Well, if there is no other book to be found, you must make the best of the dry and even

of the dull. But first make quite sure that there are none better to be had, for though in many a subject the really satisfactory book has not yet been written, still in most subjects there is a large choice between the better and the worse.

Every book ought to be so composed as to be capable of being read with enjoyment by those who bring interest and capacity to it. One cannot be playfully various and graphically picturesque upon every kind of subject. Once, in a distant British colony, a friend of mine was asked by a person who knew that he came from the University of Oxford, "What do you think of Euclid?" My friend replied that Euclid's "Elements of Geometry"—if that was what the question referred to—was a valuable treatise, whose reputation had been established for many centuries. "Yes," said the questioner, "but what do you think of Euclid's style?" My friend answered that he had always thought more about the substance than about the style of Euclid, but would be glad to know his questioner's opinion. "Well," said the latter, "I consider it quite a good style, but too systematic." Eloquence, variety, and wit are not the particular merits we look for in a scientific treatise, but however dry geometry or any other subject may appear, there is all the difference between a book which is well arranged and well expressed, a book which takes a grip of the mind and affords the pleasure of following out a line of logical thought, and a book which tumbles out facts and ideas in a confused and shapeless heap.

To you undergraduates life now seems a long vista with infinite possibilities. But, if you love learning, you will soon find that life is altogether too short

for reading half the good books from which you would like to cull knowledge. Let not an hour of it be wasted on third-rate or second-rate stuff if first-rate stuff can be had. Goethe once said of some one he knew, "He is a dull man. If he were a book I would not read him." When you find that a book is poor, and does not give you even the bare facts you are in search of, waste no more time upon it.

The immensity of the field of reading suggests another question. Ought a man to read widely, trying to keep abreast of the progress of knowledge and thought in the world at large, or is it better that he should confine himself to a very few subjects, and to proceed not discursively but upon some regular system ?

Each alternative has its advantages, but considering how rapidly knowledge is extending itself in all directions, and how every branch of it is becoming specialised, we must recognise that the range of attainment possible three or even two centuries ago is now unattainable even by the most powerful and most industrious minds. To-day the choice lies between superficiality in a larger, and some approach to thoroughness in a smaller, number of topics. Between these alternatives there can be no doubt as to your choice. Every man ought to be thorough in at least one thing, ought to know what exactness and accuracy mean, ought to be capable by his mastery of some one topic of having an opinion that is genuinely his own. So my advice to you would be to direct your reading chiefly to a few subjects, in one at least of which you may hope to make yourself proficient, and as regards other subjects, to be content with doing what you can to follow the general march

of knowledge. ✓ You will find it hard—indeed impossible—to follow that march in the physical sciences, unless you start with some special knowledge of one or more of them. Many of the branches into which they have been diverging are now so specialised that the ordinary reader can hardly comprehend the technical terms which modern treatises employ. But as respects travel and history and biography, and similarly as respects economics, the so-called “sociological subjects,” art, and literary criticism, it is possible for a man who husband his time and spends little of it on newspapers or magazines, to find leisure for the really striking books that are published on some of these topics which lie outside his special tastes. Do not, however, attempt to cover even the striking books on all of such topics. You will only dissipate your forces. Now and then a book appears which everybody ought to read, no matter how far it lies out of his range of study. It may be a brilliant poem. It may be a treatise throwing new light on some current question of home or foreign politics, about which every citizen, because he is a citizen, ought to try to have an opinion. It may be the record of some startling discovery in the realms of archaeology, for instance, or in some branch of natural science. But such books are rare; and in particular the epoch-making scientific discoveries are seldom known at the time when the world first hears of them to be really epoch-making.

Two questions may, however, have presented themselves to you. One is this: Are there not some indispensable books which every one is bound to read on pain of being deemed to be not an educated man? Certainly there are. Every language has its classics

which those who speak the language ought to have read as part of a liberal education. In our own tongue we have, say, a score of great authors—it would be easy to add another dozen, but I wish to be moderate and put the number as low as possible—of whose works every one of us is bound to have read enough to enable him to appreciate the author's peculiar quality. These of course you must read, though not necessarily all or nearly all they have written. Spenser, for instance, is an English classic, but even so voracious a reader as Macaulay admitted that few could be expected to persevere to the end of the "Faery Queene." Even smaller is the percentage of Dryden's works which a man may feel bound to read. Do not look for an opinion as to the percentage in the case of Robert Browning. The sooner you begin to read those who belong to this score, the better, for most of them are poets, and youth is the season in which to learn to love poetry. If you do not care for it then, you will hardly do so later.

The other question is, What about fiction? I can just recall an austere time, more than sixty years ago, when in Britain not a few moralists and educators were disposed to ban novel-reading altogether to young people and to treat it even among their elders as an indulgence almost as dangerous as the use of cards, dice and tobacco. Exceptions, however, were made even by the sternest of these authorities. I recollect that one of them gave his imprimatur to two stories by an estimable Scottish authoress—now long forgotten—named Miss Brunton. These tales were entitled "Discipline" and "Self-Control," and a perusal of them was well fitted to discourage the young reader from indulging any

further his taste for imaginative literature. Permitted fiction, being scanty, I did attack "Self-Control," and just got through it, but "Discipline" was too much for me. Fiction is far more read now; being abundant and cheaper, since it comes in the form of magazines as well as in books. But we have no Dickens, no Thackeray, no Hawthorne, no George Eliot.

Need anything more be said about fiction than that we should deal with it just as we should with other kinds of literature? Read the best; that is to say, read that from which you can carry away something that enlarges the range of your knowledge and sets your mind working. A good story, be it a historical romance or a picture of contemporary social conditions, gives something that is worth remembering. It may be a striking type of character, or a view of life and the influences that mould life, presented in a dramatic form. Or perhaps the tale portrays the aspects of society and manners in some other country, or is made a vehicle for an analysis of the heart and for reflections that illuminate some of the dark corners of human nature. Whichever of them it be that a powerful piece of fiction gives, the result is something more than mere transient amusement. Knowledge is increased. Thought is set in motion. New images rise before us. It is an enrichment of the mind to have erected within it a gallery of characters, the creation of imaginative minds, characters who become as real to us as the famous characters of history, to some of us possibly more real. In them we see the universal traits of human nature and learn to know ourselves and those around us better, we comprehend the common temptations and aspirations, the mixture of motives, the

way in which Fortune plays with men. We share the possession of this gallery with other educated men. It is a part of the common stock of the world's wealth!

The danger of becoming so fond of fiction as to care for no other sort of reading, a malady from which some men and more women are said to suffer, will threaten nobody who has formed the habit of reading the kind of fiction I am trying to describe, because he will enjoy no other kind. A boy or girl can usually read any sort of tale be it better or worse written. The story is enough for him. As he grows older and has read more and more of the best writers, his taste becomes more cultivated and exacting. While faults repel him more, merit attracts him more, because he has become more capable of appreciation. At last a poor quality of fiction which is merely commonplace, handling threadbare themes in a hackneyed way, the sort of fiction into which no inventive or reflective thought has gone, comes to bore him. He can no longer read it, because it is too dull or too vapid.

Prose fiction, in its higher forms, cultivates the imagination almost as well as history does, but poetry does this better than either. The pleasures of the imagination are among the highest we can enjoy. Unless, therefore, any one of you is so unlucky as to find no delight in poetry, it will always form a part of your reading. Not much of the highest order has been appearing in these later days in any country, but there is such an abundance from former days that you will never want for plenty to read and no modern language possesses so much poetry of first-rate merit as does our own.

It seems a pity that the old practice of learning a good deal of poetry by heart should be now falling into disuse, for it stored the mind in the early years of life with fine thoughts in fine words and helped to form a taste for style, seeing that style can rise to greater heights of perfection in poetry than in any kind of prose. As to what to read in poetry, there is no need in our day to warn any one against reading too much, and there is little to say about choice, for you will naturally be drawn first to the great and famous classics in our own and other tongues, and they will so form your taste that you will know how to choose among other verse writers. In particular do not omit those few great writers who have attained to a distinctive way of looking at the world as a whole (what the Germans call a *Weltanschauung*), those in whose minds and works human nature in all its varieties, human life in all its aspects, is mirrored. The author, or authors, of the Homeric poems is the earliest example: Goethe is one of the latest, and not all are poets, for Cervantes is among them.

A man who does not care for those whom the judgment of the world has approved, may conclude that the fault is with himself. But it is not always the greatest writers that give the most pleasure. Most of us have some two or three poets not classed in the first rank, perhaps writers whose fame has always been limited, to whom we frequently return because they express thoughts in a way which makes a special appeal to our own minds. Look out for these also, and cherish them when you have found them.

Though diverse wise and learned men have drawn up lists of what they describe as the Best Hundred

Books, it may be doubted whether such lists have any use beyond that of indicating the preferences of their eminent compilers and the use also of recalling to the notice of the modern public some remarkable works which it had nearly forgotten. The truth is that the excellence of a book is not absolute, *i.e.*, the same for all readers alike, but rather is relative to the knowledge and capacities and environment of the particular reader. Many a book of first-rate value to a person prepared by education and special talents to appreciate it is useless to others not so prepared. A more really interesting enquiry is, What are the books that have made most difference to the progress of the world? Such books are a part, and a significant part, of world history, yet some of them would interest comparatively few readers to-day.

The question of how much time should be devoted to the classics of other countries than our own is too large a one for me to enter on. Enough to say that whoever knows Latin or Greek or Italian or French or German or Spanish or Icelandic, will not need to be told that he ought to be just as anxious to know the masterpieces in those languages as those in his own. The ancient classics in particular give something which no modern literature supplies.

From considering, What to read, let us go on to consider How to read. Here my advice to you would be, Read with a purpose. Bend your mind upon the book. Read it so as to get out of it the best it has to give you. You may accept this advice as applicable to what is read for information, but may think it superfluous if the book is a story of other work read for amusement, because presumably no one will persevere with such a book unless it interests him.

Yet even where the aim is amusement and the book a work of fiction one man may, if he read it in the right way, extract more benefit as well as more pleasure than another would do. If the story is worth reading, it is so because it not only appeals to our curiosity, but also because it pleasurably stirs our thought.

With other kinds of literature, with science or philosophy or history or economics, the worth of the book is to be measured by what you can carry away from it, and that depends mainly on the spirit in which you read. The book, as already observed, must have quality enough to stimulate thought, to give you what is called a mental reaction. But however good the quality, the reaction will not follow unless you address your mind to the subject. The purpose must be either to get something—whether facts or ideas—which you can add to your store of knowledge or else to receive a stimulus which will quicken your own powers of thinking and feeling. These two benefits usually go together. It is not the quantity of reading that counts, but the quantity and the intensity of thought that are evoked. Nothing is gained by skimming over hundreds or thousands of pages of print unless something remains from the process. So if after having honestly applied your intellect to a book you do not find anything you care to carry away, drop it. Either it is not worth further effort, or it may be outside the range of your appreciation. ✓

You will not, however, fancy that all the books you may have to consult deserve careful study. If thoroughness is a virtue to be cultivated, still more is time a thing to be saved. The old maxim, "Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well," is less true

than it seems, and has led many people into a lamentable waste of time. Many things are worth doing if you can do them passably well with a little time and effort, which are not worth doing thoroughly if so to do them requires much time and effort.

Time is the measure of everything in life, and every kind of work ought to be adjusted to it. One of the commonest mistakes we all make is spending ourselves on things whose value is below the value of the time they require. Many a book may be worth reading rapidly so as to extract from it the few important facts it contains, and yet be by no means worth a prolonged study. Economise time in reading as in everything else. The adage that Time is Money falls far short of the truth. Time is worth more than money because by its judicious employment more enjoyment can be secured than money can purchase.

One of the less fortunate results of the large amount of matter which the printing-press turns out in our time is the tendency it has bred to read everything hastily and unthinkingly. The man who glances through several newspapers in the morning and two or three magazines in the evening forms the habit of inattention, or, more correctly, half attention. He reads with no intention of remembering anything except what directly and urgently bears upon his own business, and when in the scanty leisure which business and the practice of reading newspapers and magazines leave him, he takes up a book, this habit of half attention prevents him from applying his mind to what he reads; instead of stimulating thought constant reading of this kind deadens it, and the quantity of reading and the quantity of thinking are

apt to be in inverse ratio to one another. To say, "Don't read without thinking," might be deemed to be that useless thing, a Counsel of Perfection; but I may say, "Beware of the reading Habit." It is one of the curses of our age. What is wanted to-day is less printing and less reading, but more thinking. Reading is easy, and thinking hard work, but the one is useless without the other.

* You may ask what is the best way of trying so to read books as to be able to retain the best they give us. If the book be one you wish to know with absolute thoroughness, as students at Oxford University were in my time expected to know Aristotle's *Ethics* and the history of Thucydides for our degree examination, you will find it a good plan to read over every day all that you read the day before. At first this is irksome, but it fixes things in your mind and is a saving in the long run. Everybody has his own devices for recording what he deems best in what he reads, but I can recommend that of making very short notes, or references, on the fly leaf (or leaves) at the end and beginning of a volume of the most important facts or views it contains, noting the page on which each occurs, so that one can refer promptly to the things which struck one at the time. Where a work is either of exceptional merit for its fertility in suggestion, or is specially rich in out-of-the-way facts, it may be worth while to bind in additional fly leaves. Should the book be not one's own but borrowed from a friend or a library, one must of course make the notes or references in a MS. note-book, and in that case, since the treatise will not be at hand to refer to, it becomes necessary to make a somewhat fuller abstract of the facts it is desired to remember. The advantage of

either method is that the process of compressing the fact or view into the fewest possible words helps to fix it in the memory. I remember cases in which eight or ten entries represented the total results of reading a book of four hundred octavo pages, yet those entries might serve to make some dark things clear.

The late Lord Acton, the most learned man I ever knew, was in the habit of copying out on slips of paper passages or sentences which he thought valuable from all the volumes he perused. He had hundreds of cardboard boxes filled with these slips, the boxes being labelled with the titles of their subjects; and he seemed to know how to lay his hand upon any extract he wanted. Few, however, could hope to bring leisure and industry like his to the accumulation of such a mass of knowledge; and he spent so much time in the process of gathering the opinions of others that he had little left for using them or for giving the world the fruit of his own thoughts, often far better worth having than that which he had plucked from other orchards.

There are those who keep note-books in which they enter the most remarkable facts or aphorisms or statements of doctrine and opinion which they encounter in the course of their reading. For persons fortunate enough to have formed methodical habits this may be a good plan.

Ought reading to be systematic? Should a man lay down a scheme and confine himself to one or more subjects in which he can become proficient rather than spread himself out in superficial sciolism over a large number?

For many of us Life answers this question by requiring attention to be devoted primarily to books which bear upon our occupation or are connected with it. For others again pronounced tastes point out certain lines of reading as those in which they will find most pleasure. Yet there is also a third class whom neither their avocations nor any marked personal preferences guide in any particular direction. My advice to these would be: If you have not got a definite taste, try to acquire one. Find some pursuit or line of study which you can relish, and give to it most of your spare time. It will be a constant spring of pleasure, an occupation in solitude, a distraction from worries, even a consolation in misfortune, to have something unconnected with one's daily work to which one can turn for change and refreshment of spirit. Some branch of natural history, or some one of the physical sciences, is perhaps the best for this purpose, but any branch of history, or archaeology or art (including, as one of the very best, music) will serve. When one has such a pursuit or taste, it naturally becomes the central line which a man's reading follows. In advising a concentration of study upon some few topics, I do not suggest that you should cease to interest yourselves in the general movements of the world. Everyone ought to try to keep abreast of his time, so far at least as not to be ignorant of the great advances that are being made. Of most of these you will not be able to know much, but the more you can know, the better, so long as you do not scatter and dissipate your efforts in such wise as to become a mere smatterer.

There is a maxim which, like that other venerable dictum already referred to, sounds good but has often

done harm. (A book might be written with the title *Moral Maxims and the Mischief they Do*). You all remember the lines :

A little learning is a dangerous thing ;
Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring.

With all respect to the poet, this is by no means true. A little learning is not dangerous so long as you know that it is little. Danger begins with thinking you know much more than you do. It is not knowledge, be it great or small, but the conceit of knowledge, that misleads men : and the best remedy against this is not ignorance, but the knowing some one thing really well. Thoroughness in one subject enables a man to recognise his scantiness of attainment in other subjects, not to add that to have learnt any one thing well helps him in dealing with whatever else he touches, since he learns to discern more quickly what is essential, and to make sure that his knowledge, even if it remains elementary, is not merely superficial.

Do not be surprised if after advising you to read thoroughly I also advise you to learn to read swiftly. There is no inconsistency, for thoroughness depends not so much on the time spent on a piece of work as upon the intensity wherewith the mind is concentrated upon it. One man will read a book in half as many hours as another, and yet know more of what is in the book ; and this because of his superior power of turning upon it the full stream of his mental energy. Only exceptional minds possess this gift in high measure, as did Macaulay, who read a book so swiftly that he seemed to turn the pages almost without pausing, taking in at one glance all that was in them,

and yet carrying away all that was worth remembering. But you can cultivate the gift by practice, and it deserves cultivating, for it means better results with less time spent.

The counsel of swift reading is, of course, applicable only to books which are read chiefly for their facts or their views, not to those whose merit lies largely in their style. It would be folly to gallop through Virgil or Keats or Charles Lamb or Heinrich Heine or Chateaubriand. Not in poetry only must one move deliberately, but also in reading fine and finished prose, where every word has its fitting place in the sentence, and its due effect in calling up subtle associations and in touching, however delicately, the spring of emotion.

Finally, let me suggest that you read with independence. There are various spirits in which a book may be approached. One must not be captious, hunting out mistakes or blemishes. But neither must one submissively assume that the author is always right. No author, however great, is exempt from error. True it is that modesty is always in order, and deference due to writers of established credit. We must take them as likely to be wiser than we are. Nevertheless, if you wish to profit by your reading, do not forget to scrutinise each argument as it is presented, each inference drawn, each maxim delivered, to see if it be justified by the facts. Sound criticism seeks rather to discover and appreciate merits than to note faults; but however ready we may be to admire, we must test our author as we go along, and make sure that the view we accept from him is formed not because he has given it but because he has convinced us that it is correct. As

like Wordsworth's maiden, with earth's diurnal course, it is made as fast as its own graves. And for its changes it depends upon the mobility of the skies. The mere green flushing of its own sap makes only the least of its varieties; for the greater it must wait upon the visits of the light. Spring and autumn are inconsiderable events in a landscape compared with the shadows of a cloud.

The cloud controls the light, and the mountains on earth appear or fade according to its passage; they were so simply, from head to foot, the luminous grey or the emphatic purple, as the cloud permits, that their own local colour and their own local season are lost and cease, effaced before the all-important mood of the cloud.

The sea has no mood except that of the sky and of its winds. It is the cloud that, holding the sun's rays in a sheaf as a giant holds a handful of spears, strikes the horizon, touches the extreme edge with a delicate revelation of light, or suddenly puts it out and makes the foreground shine.

Every one knows the manifest work of the cloud when it descends and partakes in the landscape obviously, lies half-way across the mountain slope, stoops to rain heavily upon the lake, and blots out part of the view by the rough method of standing in front of it. But its greatest things are done from its own place, aloft. Thence does it distribute the sun.

Thence does it lock away between the hills and valleys more mysteries than a poet conceals, but, like him, not by interception. Thence it writes out and cancels all the tracery of Monte Rosa, or lets the pencils of the sun renew them. Thence, hiding

nothing, and yet, making dark, it sheds deep colour upon the forest land of Sussex, so that, seen from the hills, all the country is divided between grave blue and graver sunlight.

And all this is but its influence, its secondary work upon the world. Its own beauty is unaltered when it has no earthly beauty to improve. It is always great: above the street, above the suburbs, above the gas-works and the stucco, above the faces of painted white houses—the painted surfaces that have been devised as the only things able to vulgarise light, as they catch it and reflect it grotesquely from their importunate gloss. This is to be well seen on a sunny evening in Regent Street.

Even here the cloud is not so victorious as when it towers above some little landscape of rather paltry interest—a conventional river heavy with water, gardens with their little evergreens, walks, and shrubberies; and thick trees, impervious to the light, touched, as the novelists always have it, with “autumn tints.” High over these rises, in the enormous scale of the scenery of clouds, what no man expected—an heroic sky. Few of the things that were ever done upon earth are great enough to be done under such a heaven. It was surely designed for other days. It is for an epic world. Your eyes sweep a thousand miles of cloud. What are the distances of earth to these, and what are the distances of the clear and cloudless sky? The very horizons of the landscape are near, for the round world dips so soon; and the distances of the mere clear sky are unmeasured—you rest upon nothing until you come to a star, and the star itself is immeasurable.

But in the sky of "sunny Alps" of clouds the sight goes farther, with conscious flight, than it could ever have journeyed otherwise. Man would not have known distance veritably without the clouds. There are mountains indeed, precipices and deeps, to which those of the earth are pigmy. Yet the sky-heights, being so far off, are not overpowering by disproportion, like some futile building fatuously made too big for the human measure. The cloud in its majestic place composes with a little Perugino-tree. For you stand or stray in the futile building, while the cloud is no mansion for man, and out of reach of his limitations.

The cloud, moreover, controls the sun, not merely by keeping the custody of his rays, but by becoming the counsellor of his temper. The cloud veils an angry sun, or, more terribly, lets fly an angry ray, suddenly bright upon tree and tower, with iron-grey storm for a background. Or when anger had but threatened, the cloud reveals him, gentle beyond hope. It makes peace, constantly, just before sunset.

It is in the confidence of the winds, and wears their colours. There is a heavenly game, on south-west wind days, when the clouds are bowled by a breeze from behind the evening. They are round and brilliant, and come leaping up from the horizon for hours. This is a frolic and haphazard sky.

All unlike this is the sky that has a centre, and stands composed about it. As the clouds marshalled the earthly mountains, so the clouds in turn are now ranged. The tops of all the celestial Andes aloft are swept at once by a single ray, warmed with a single colour. Promontory after league-long promontory of

a stiller Mediterranean in the sky is called out of mist and grey by the same finger. The cloudland is very great, but a sunbeam makes all its nations and continents sudden with light.

All this is for the untravelled. All the winds bring him this scenery. It is only in London, for part of the autumn and part of the winter, that the unnatural smoke-fog comes between. And for many and many a day no London eye can see the horizon, or the first threat of the cloud like a man's hand. There never was a great painter who had no exquisite horizons, and if Corot and Crome were right, the Londoner loses a great thing.

He loses the coming of the cloud, and when it is high in air he loses its shape. A cloud-lover is not content to see a snowy and rosy head piling into the top of the heaven; he wants to see the base and the altitude. The perspective of a cloud is a great part of its design—whether it lies so that you can look along the immense horizontal distances of its floor, or whether it rears so upright a pillar that you look up its mountain steeps in the sky as you look at the rising heights of a mountain that stands, with you, on the earth.

The cloud has a name suggesting darkness; nevertheless, it is not merely the guardian of the sun's rays and their director. It is the sun's treasurer; it holds the light that the world has lost. We talk of sunshine and moonshine, but not of cloud-shine, which is yet one of the illuminations of our skies. A shining cloud is one of the most majestic of all secondary lights. If the reflecting moon is the bride, this is the friend of the bridegroom.

Needless to say, the cloud of a thunderous summer is the most beautiful of all. It has spaces of a grey for which there is no name, and no other cloud looks over at a vanishing sun from such heights of blue air. The shower-cloud, too, with its thin edges, comes across the sky with so influential a flight that no ship going out to sea can be better worth watching. The dullest thing perhaps in the London streets is that people take their rain there without knowing anything of the cloud that drops it. It is merely rain, and means wetness. The shower-cloud there has limits of time, but no limits of form, and no history whatever. It has not come from the clear edge of the plain to the south, and will not shoulder anon the hill to the north. The rain, for this city, hardly comes or goes; it does but begin and stop. No one looks after it on the path of its retreat.

Sister Nivedita (Margaret E. Noble)

THE INDIAN SAGAS*

Unseen, but all pervasive, in the life of every community, is the great company of the ideals. No decalogue has half the influence over human conduct that is exercised by a single drama or a page of narrative. The theory of chivalry interests us, but the *Idylls of the King* help to mould our character.

The whole of history, in so far as it may be known, is the common possession of the race ; but, in addition to this, every language makes its own contribution of literary creations, and national custom determines the degree in which these shall become available to all classes of the community, thereby reacting upon the national type. Few have considered how much might be done to ennoble and dignify common life in England by a wider dispersion of the love for Shakespeare. As it is, the Bible being the only book that is used in this sense, the careers and opinions of a few Syrian shepherds are apt to be more potent among us than that great Brutus, Desdemona, Horatio and their kindred, who are the offspring of the genius of our countryman, and in some sense therefore the fruit of English civic life itself.

It is said that in Greece the poetry of Homer and Euripides is known amongst the poorer classes to this

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day; and certain it is that the Catholic Church has done a great and little-understood service, in bringing the lives of the saints of all countries to bear upon the development of each. Every man habitually measures himself against some model, therefore every addition to the range of available types is to be welcomed. A king feels himself to be one of a class of royal persons who must be not only authoritative but also picturesque in their behaviour. And, whether he likes it or not, by this standard he knows himself to stand or fall. His very rank forces his pattern upon him. Amongst those of smaller place and greater personal freedom, capacity more readily shows its own complexion. Some of us, were our commonplace faculties touched with divine fire, would find our destiny in the qualities of the ideal merchant and administrator. That peculiar form of integrity, dignity, and wisdom that belongs to such a function would prove to be ours, or attainable by us. But although this is probably the commonest logical issue in English national life at present, it does not follow that every Englishman is fitter to achieve it. Here and there, especially perhaps among the Celtic contingent, we find one born for the quite different goal of perfect knighthood. Loyalty to leader and comrade, sympathy for the oppressed, far-shining fearlessness and love of freedom, are traits characteristic of an age of chivalry; and persons who embody them represent such a period, it being neither more nor less admirable than that of merchant-prince and caravan-chief. The potentialities of one man lead towards sainthood, of another to poetry, of a third to science or mechanics. One gravitates into leadership, another as naturally becomes disciple. One enjoys knowledge, another ignorance.

Were all of us developed to our own utmost we may take it that every place in life would be filled, every part in the world-drama played, but by men and women of such ripe and determined personality that we could no more confuse one with the other than we could mistake the conduct of Helen of Troy for that of Elisabeth of Hungary, or hers for that of Faust's Gretchen.

We have to notice, moreover, that in European life only the born idealist is deeply influenced by any of the miscellaneous characters of history and literature. Religion alone amongst us can exercise this compelling power on a large scale. And this is related to the fact that only religion gives ideals themselves as motives. Circumstances have in many cases offered such a setting that a life has been forced into brilliance and distinction, but the self-born intention of the saints could never be wholly fulfilled. Iphigenia could hardly have refused her sacrifice. Joan of Arc, on the contrary, must always have felt that the sword of Michael might have been held still more stainless and with a greater courage. It is this fact that gives to the ideals of religion their supreme power of individuation. We must remember also that they differ from others in making a universal appeal. The girl who aimed at becoming Portia would be guilty of vanity: she whose model is the Blessed Virgin receives the respect of all. To imitate Socrates would be a miserable affectation: to imitate the religious hero is regarded as a common duty.

It may seem impossible to dower the heroes and heroines of literature with this projective energy of the lives of saints; but in India, as to some extent in Iceland, the feat has been accomplished. For India

is also one of the saga lands. At every lull in her history we may hear the chanting of her bards, and the joy of her people in the story of their past. The long twilight of the North is no better adapted to the growth of such a literature than the deep and early night of the South. In verandahs and courtyards, with the women concealed behind screens at the back, it has been the Indian fashion for hundreds of years through the winter months to gather at dusk round the seat of the Wandering Teller, and listen hour after hour to his stirring theme. Surrounded by lights and flowers, gay carpets and burning incense, there is in his performance a mixture of reading, song, and story. It is something of opera, sermon, and literature all in one.

Ever since the commencement of our era the Hindu people have possessed in their present forms two great poems, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. The first of these is their Wars of Troy, their Heimskringla, their Morte d'Arthur. That is to say, it is the book of the Deeds and the Wars of the Heroes. Thanks to the long-established culture of the race, and the prestige which all literature enjoys as "sacred," the Mahabharata is to this day the strongest influence in the shaping of the lives and ambitions of Hindu boys.

The battle which it describes took place, if at all very nearly fifteen hundred years before the birth of Christ. It lasted many days, and the field of combat was called Kurukshetra, being situated on that great plain near Delhi where critical moments in the history of India have been so often decided. For many a century after Kurukshetra the wandering bards all over India sang of the great battle; and when any new

theme claimed their creative powers, it had to be recounted as if originally told by one of the heroes to another at some particular moment in the course of the main narrative. In this way the heart's heart of the whole poem, the Bhagavat Gita (a title translated by some scholars as "Gospel of the Bhagavats") brings an interesting instance of double drama with it. The Gita consists in itself of a dialogue between a young chieftain and Krishna, the Divine Personage who is acting as his charioteer, at the moment of the opening of the eighteen days' combat. But the device which enables the conversation to be given in detail is the picture of an old blind king, head of one of the rival houses, seated some miles away, and attended in his anxiety by a man of what is called yogic, or hyper-æsthetic, that is, psychic sense, who utters to him every word as it is spoken.

The exquisite story of Savitri, similarly, is told by a rishi, or great sage, to Yudhisthira, at the close of day, during the banishment of the five Pandavas to the forest.

On this plan, more than half the country-side tales of Northern India could be woven into the Mahabharata when it was first thrown into form by some unknown hand, three or four centuries before Christ. It underwent its final recension not more than two or three hundred years later—a possible fifteen hundred years after the occurrence of the events which are its central theme. It is easy to see that this saga fulfils thus all the conditions of great epic poetry. The stories that it tells have been worked over by the imagination of singers and people for hundreds of years. They have become simple, direct, inevitable. They are spoken out of the inmost heart of a nation

not yet dreaming of self-consciousness. They are nothing if not absolutely sincere.

Comparing the Mahabharata with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, we find it less formed, less highly-wrought; more amorphous, but also more brilliant and intense. To quote a great writer on Indian thought:—"Outline is entirely lost in colour."

These characteristics do not hold good to the same extent of the second Indian epic, the *Ramayana* which has a close-worked motive running throughout. This poem—the tale of the Exile of Sita and Rama—received its present form not long after the Mahabharata, early in the Buddhist period. It is supposed that under Buddhist influence the monastic life had come to be so honoured that the flower of the nation were drawn to it, rather than to the mingled responsibilities and joys of the home. The romantic reaction in ideals which was inevitable gathered itself about the ancient theme of a princely couple of the house of Oudh, in whom all that was precious in monasticism was found blended with all that was desirable in sovereignty and love. The strong and quiet story spoke straight to the heart of the people, and to this day there are no characters so beloved by the masses as those of the *Ramayana*, no one force that goes so far towards the moulding of Indian womanhood, as the ever-living touch of the little hand of that Sita who is held to have been Queen of Ayodhya thousands of years ago.

The *Ramayana*, then, is a love story which grew up and came to its flowering in the beginning of the Christian era. But it is unlike all other romances of that early epoch in the subtlety and distinctiveness of its various characters, and in the complexity of its

interpretation of life. For though humanity itself may differ little from age to age, we have been accustomed to look for a definite growth in its literary self-reflection. We expect primitive poetry to be pre-occupied with events, portraying men and women only in bold outline, as they move with simple grandeur through their fate. We do not look to it for subtle analysis of motive, or any exact mingling of the sweet and bitter cup of the personal life. The progress of literature up to this time has been largely, as we think, the intensifying recognition of human variation within a given psychological area. And in making such a statement we take pains to eliminate from the word "progress" all sense of improvement, since Homer remains for ever superior to Browning. Simply, we find in art a parallel to the physical process by which the race moves on from strong family and communal types to a universal individual divergence. An overwhelming appreciation of spiritual content is what we have been ready in Europe to call "the modern spirit." It is a question whether the name can stand, however, when the Indian Epics become better known; for, strangely enough, in spite of their age and the heroic nature of their matter, they are permeated with this very quality. In the Ramayana especially, as incident leads to incident, we have to realise that this is no story told for our amusement, but a woman's soul laid bare before us, as she climbs from steep to steep of renunciation.

Perhaps only those who are in touch with national aspiration can fully understand the roundness and plasticity of its drama, but even the most cursory reader must be struck with this insight and delicacy of the Ramayana.

It is more to-day than a completed work of art ; it is still a means for the development of the popular imagination. Even amongst the written versions we find no two quite alike. All children are brought up the story, yet those who can read the original Sanskrit are few in number. To meet this fact translations have been made into various vernaculars by great poets from time to time—into Bengali, for instance, by Kritibas, and into Hindi by Tulsidas. Special incidents again have been selected and worked up into great episodes in Sanskrit, by one and another, such as Bhavabhuti in his “ Exile of Sita,” or Datta in the “ Epic of Ravana ”

In these versions the story becomes more and more clearly defined. Pulsing through every Ramayana runs the Hindu reverence for Rama as man, husband, and king. This reverence may seek new modes of expression, but it can never admit that that which is expressed was at any time less than the ideal. Yet we must remember that that ideal is, in the ancient terms, Oriental rather than Occidental. It belonged to a conception of duty that placed Society far above the individual, and made the perfect king seek the good of his people without any consideration for his own or his wife's happiness. The fact that made his marriage perfect was its complete demonstration that it was as possible for two as for one to devote themselves first to the general weal. For the acquiescence of Sita is given in her twenty years of silent banishment. Once during that time, says one of the regional poets, she saw her husband as he passed through the forest where she was and kept silence still. And though the incident is an addition not found in the original, it only serves to bring out more clearly

the intention of the first poem, where every dumb moment of those twenty years speaks louder than words the wife's acquiescence in her husband's will.

Behind the vernacular translators stand all those old nurses and granddams on whose laps the poets themselves first heard the great tale; and it is their perfect freedom to give their own versions of each episode—as must any of us in recounting actual happenings—that keeps it fresh and living and explains its changes of tint in the hands of genius.

Without the recognition of this working of the communal consciousness on the theme, there can be no complete criticism of the Ramayana, for of this are all new transcribings of the story born. It is more or less in this fashion that the old tale is told:

Long ago, in the age of the heroes, there dwelt kings in Oudh, of whose race came one Rama, heir to the throne, great of heart, and goodly to look upon. And Rama was wedded to Sita, daughter of Janaka the king, fairest and purest of all the children of men. Now Rama had been trained in all knowledge and in the sports of princes, living, as was the manner of those days, in the forest, with his brother Lakshman, in the care of a great sage. And it happened, after he was come home again and wedded with Sita, that there arose a trouble between the king his father, and one of the younger queens, Kaikeyi, who desired that her son Bharata should inherit the throne, and pleaded that her husband had once promised her whatever gift she should desire. And when one told Rama of this contention that was embittering his father's age, he replied at once by a vow to renounce the throne and retire to the forest for fourteen years. And gladly, he said, was this vow made, since it would give pleasure

to Kaikeyi, his step-mother, and confer on Bharata, his younger brother, the kingdom and its wealth. And Sita, overhearing the vow, added hers to his, in spite of his entreaties that she should not quit her royal state. Lakshman also declared that he would not be separated from his elder brother. So all three fared forth together into the great forest. Thither, shortly after, followed Bharata, saying that the king their father was now dead of grief at the wrong done his eldest son, and imploring Rama to return and take his own place in his kingdom, for Bharata had mingled no whit in the scheming of Kaikeyi. But Rama refused till the days of his vow should be ended; after fourteen years, he said, he would return and reign. Then, very reluctantly, went Bharata back to Oudh, but he carried with him the sandals of Rama, declaring that these should hold the throne, and he himself sat always below them, governing in their name.

Left in the forest, the life of Sita, Rama, and Lakshman, became that of gentle anchorites, and they grew great in all manner of wood-craft, so that the wild creatures answered to their call. But Rama and Lakshman never ceased to remember their knighthood, holding themselves ready with sword and bow for the service of all who were in distress. It was on one of their expeditions of knight-errantry that they offended a great ogress, and brought on themselves the enmity of her powerful kinsman, Ravana the Ten-headed, king of the island of Lanka or Ceylon.

It was inevitable that some of the skalds who chanted the deeds of Rama should attach themselves specially to the character of this mythical Ravana, elaborating all connected with him. Hence, just as Hector and Andromache are amongst the most

beautiful figures in the *Iliad*, so, in the Indian poem, is Mandodari, the wife of Ravana, one of the strongest personages, at least from a literary point of view. To this day old wives tell of an incident that has crept into no published poem. When the time came, they say, that Rama had conquered and slain his ten-headed foe, Mandodari was inconsolable that she was now a widow. Then it was declared to her that, till her husband's funeral fire was dead she should be no widow, and that that fire should burn for ever. And so, sure enough, we have only to shut our ears tight, and we hear the roaring of the flames that are burning Ravana to ashes!

For so it was, that Rama had to defeat and slay this evil king in order to recover Sita, who had been stolen from him. The story of the Taking of Sita is as beautiful as Pluto's Capture of Proserpine.

It is the close of day in the forest, and Sita is alone. Lakshman—one of the most “perfect gentle knights” in the whole range of fiction—has left her, at her earnest entreaty that he should go to seek for Rama, but he has first drawn three circles about her with the end of his bow, and warned her not to step outside. The sun is not yet set, however, when a Brahmin appears, ashen-clad, with matted locks, and begs for charity. Sita pleads that it is late and she is alone, imploring him to go. And this he promises to do if only first she will step outside and give him a little food. She is full of dim forebodings of evil, but pity at last gains the upper hand of fear; she steps out of her enchanted circles to bestow alms on him; he throws off the disguise of the Brahmin, appears as Ravana himself, and carries her off to his kingdom in his chariot. It is during the first terrible

moment of the journey that Sita drops her jewels stealthily behind her, in order that those coming after may be able to trace her flight.

Surely this picture of the exiled queen, standing amidst the long shadows in her simple hut, lost in the struggle between her desire to aid and all the invisible safeguards of her womanhood, is one that deserves the brush of some great painter.

For years Sita is kept confined in Lanka, and Rama and Lakshman, in their progress through what is depicted as the wilderness of Southern India, owe her discovery and much of their success in finally releasing her, to the services of their great ally, Hanuman, the monkey-general. It is supposed that if there be any historical foundation for the legend of the Ramayana, this name of Hanuman may refer to the chieftain of some strong aboriginal tribe. In any case, he stands to-day for all that is great in discipleship. Filled with the worship of Rama, he brings to his service the unquestioning obedience of a child and the genius of a man. It is in his presence and that of Lakshman that Sita goes proudly, at her own request, through that ordeal by fire which is to prove her stainlessness, and he declares that at death the names of Sita and Rama will be found written on his heart.

It is now time for the return to the kingdom, and Sita and Rama go back to Oudh, reigning there in perfect happiness close upon a year. Then comes the great crisis of their parting, in deference to the people's doubt of Sita. She retires to a distant forest, to live the life of a nun, under the care of Valmiki, the old hermit; and Rama sits alone on the throne of Oudh for the rest of his life. Once only does he speak of his loss. His subjects desire him to take a new queen, for

the performance of a state sacrifice that he cannot make alone. But here the wrath of the king blazes forth. No woman shall ever be put in Sita's place, but a golden image of her is made, and fills her part in the appointed ceremonies.

Shortly after her arrival in the forest, Sita had become the mother of twin sons, and Valmiki, their foster-father, brings these up as princes, only taking care to add to their education the knowledge of his own great poem, the Ramayana. He allows it to be supposed, also, that their mother is dead. When the boys are some twenty years of age, news goes about the country of a great religious festival to be held at the Court of Ayodhya, and the hermit makes ready to go up to it, taking his two foster-sons in the character of minstrels, and the queen.

The rest of the story is inevitable. The eyes of Rama discover his boys as they recite before him the deeds of his own past, and calling Valmiki to him, he speaks with hopeless longing the name of Sita. The old man draws her forward, and she unveils her face to her husband. At this moment, as the two look each upon the face that has been present to every thought for twenty years, the murmur of the people's doubt is once more heard, and the cry rises from the crowd, "Let her be tried by fire!"

No woman's pride could brook this renewed insult. Sita, the proud, the silent, the stainless, cries out for death. At her words, the ground opens, a chariot appears, and in the arms of her Mother Earth she is withdrawn from the world of men. Rama waits only to bestow the kingdom on his sons, and then plunges into the forest, to be for ever lost to humanity.

The story of the Mahabharata would be less easy to recount. Mighty warriors, beautiful women, and great saints move to and fro across its scenes in a glittering melee. The local colour is rich to a fault. The poem abounds in descriptions of social customs, domestic comfort, the fashions of old armour and similar details. But it is in the conception of character which it reveals that it becomes most significant. Bhishma, the Indian Arthur, is there, with his perfect knighthood and awful purity of soul. Lancelot is there—a glorified Lancelot, whose only fall was the utterance of a half-truth once, with purpose to mislead—in the person of the young king, Yudhisthira. And Krishna, the Indian Christ, is there, in that guise of prince and leader of men that has given him the name in India of “The Perfect Incarnation.” One of the rival houses consists of a family of no less than a hundred children so that the multiplicity of persons and incidents is best left to the imagination. Yet certain main features belong to the treatment of all characters alike. For the attention of the poet-chronicler is fixed on the invisible shackles of selfhood that bind us all. He seems to be describing great events; in reality he does not for one instant forget that he is occupied with the history of souls, depicting the incidence of their experience and knowledge on the external world.

One story is typical. The young princes are taking a lesson in shooting, and a clay bird has been set up as target. One by one they are asked by their master what they see. They reply, “A bird,” “A branch supporting a bird,” and so on. Till at last he puts the question to Arjuna, one of the youngest, and receives the answer, “A bird’s head and in that head

only the eye." The moment of the telling of this story to an Indian child is tense with feeling. For it embodies the culminating ideal of the nation, inasmuch as "Concentration of Mind" stands among Hindus for the supreme expression of that greatness which we may recognise in honour or courage or any kind of heroism.

The central character of the Mahabharata fulfils a very subtle demand. Bhishma is intended for the type of king and knight. Now, knighthood implies the striking of many blows, and kingship the protecting of manifold and diverse interests, but perfection requires that nothing shall be done from the motive of self-interest. In order, therefore, that he may display all the greatness of character that is possible to man in these relations, Bhishma is made, as heir to the throne, to renounce all rights of succession and even of marriage, at the beginning of his life, by way of setting his father free to marry a fisher-girl whom he loves, and make her son his heir.

From this point, having set aside the privileges of parent and sovereign, Bhishma is made to bear to the full the responsibilities of both; and finally, in the energy and faithfulness of his military service, life itself can only be taken from him when he with his own lips has given instructions for his defeat. In Bhishma, therefore, we have the creation of a people who have already learnt to regard detachment as a necessary element of moral grandeur.

It is strange to us, but perfectly consistent with this point of view, that as long as Bhishma remains a militant figure in the battle of Kurukshetra he is acting as generalissimo for what he regards as the worse cause of the two. He has done his best to prevent the war,

but when it is determined on, he sets himself to obey his sovereign, in the place that is his own. He is filled, as the Indian poet represents him, with supernatural assurance that his side must lose, yet he strikes not a single blow either more or less for this consideration. In like manner it is told of Krishna that after he has done his utmost for peace in the interests of justice, he is approached by both parties for his aid, and that such is the calmness of his outlook on life that he submits the matter to a moral test. To one claimant he will give his armies; the other he will serve in person unarmed, he says, leaving the choice to themselves. It is clear that the man whose greed and ambition are plunging whole nations into war will not have the spiritual insight to choose the Divine Person for his champion, rather than great hosts. And he does not.

Such stories illustrate the Hindu endeavour to understand every man's relation to a given situation, and to read in conflicting lines of conduct that same irresistible necessity which, acting from within, hurls each one of us upon his fate. In this endeavour lies the real secret of that tolerance which has so puzzled observers in the Indian people. Not only has there never been religious persecution among Hindus, but the sceptic, the atheist, or the Christian missionary is as free to preach on the steps of the temple as the believing priest. The European correlative of the trait is found in the dramatist or novelist of genius who can represent the motives of opposing sides so as to draw equally upon our sympathy; but this has always been an exceptional ability with us, and not a common attitude of mind. In the Mahabharata itself the most perfect expression of such reconciliation of opposites is

perhaps found in the story of Shishupal, the enemy of Krishna. Shishupal's mother had won Krishna's promise that her son might sin against him a hundred times, and yet be forgiven. But this cup of error was already full, when his crowning blasphemy occurred. The occasion was that of the offering of certain honours to the Chief of Knights. Krishna, in right of his divinity, had already been named, and the decision that to him should the sacrifice be made was spoken. To the deep-rooted hostility of Shishupal, however, this was unendurable. He broke out into indignant protest. In what sense, he asked, was Krishna greatest of the Knights? Was not Bhishma present? Was not Yudhisthira their liege? Let the honours be paid to one of these.

Shocked and outraged, every one looked to Bhishma to punish the impiety; but that aged clansman's face was turned towards the Avatar. Then, as all waited in suspense, from behind the Blessed Knight flashed forth the bright discus of Vishnu, and striking the helmet of Shishupal clove him through, even to the ground. And lo, before their eyes, the soul of that sinful one came forth like a mass of flame, and passed over and melted into the feet of Krishna. "For even the enemies of God go to salvation," says the old chronicler, "by thinking much upon him." A later increment of explanation makes the point still clearer. It had happened in some previous age that a great and enlightened spirit had fallen under a curse—had strayed, that is to say, into those circles of destiny that would involve him in human birth. And the All Merciful, being touched with pity, offered him the path of return through seven births as the friend of God, or three as His enemy. The second alternative

was his instant choice, and he became in one life Ravana the foe of Rama; in another, a certain persecuting king; and in the third, this Shishupal, now once more absorbed into Eternal Bliss.

Few characters in literature can rank with the heroic figure of young Karna. Dark with anger, but perfect in chivalry, he resents to the death a slight levelled at his birth, yet turns in the midst of princely acclaims to salute reverently the aged charioteer supposed to be his father. Full of a palpitating humanity is Draupadi, the Pandava Queen. Beautiful and high-spirited as she is, she has all a woman's inability to keep a secret, and her foolish boastfulness almost betrays the heroes before their time is ripe. The strongest attraction of such figures is always the actuality. There is nothing incredibly exalted about them, but good and evil are entwined in their natures, strong and heroic though they be, as in us all.

The end of Bhishma is like that of some ancient Norseman. Lying on the field of battle where he fell, he refuses to be moved, and asks only for a bed and pillow such as are fit for knightly bowmen. One of the young chiefs divines his meaning, and, stepping forward, shoots arrows into the earth till what was desired has been provided. And on his bed of arrows Bhishma dies.

Such are some of the characters who form the ideal world of the Hindu home. Absorbed in her "worship of the Feet of the Lord," the little girl sits for hours in her corner, praying, "Make me a wife like Sita! Give me a husband like Rama!" Each act or speech of the untrained boy rushing in from school, may remind some one, half-laughing, half-admiring, of Yudhisthira or Lakshman, of Karna or

Arjuna, and the name is sure to be recalled. It is expected that each member of the family shall have his favourite hero, who will be to him a sort of patron saint, and may appear at the centre of the story, if he is bidden to recount it. Thus, when one tells the Ramayana, Ravana is the hero; another makes it Hanuman; only the books keep it always Sita and Rama. And it is well understood that the chosen ideal exercises a preponderant influence over one's own development. None could love Lakshman without growing more full of gentle courtesy and tender consideration for the needs of others; he who cares for Hanuman cannot fail to become more capable of supreme devotion and ready service. And justice itself must reign in the heart that adores Yudhisthira.

The character of Bhishma in the Mahabharata as that of Sita in the Ramayana is a proof that Indian philosophy was completed before the Epics. But that philosophy itself, we must remember, was directly related to the common life of common folk. Only this fact can explain the recognition and welcome of such conceptions by the whole nation. Let us look at the love story of Sita. Her feeling is consecrated by the long years of poverty filled with worship, in the forest. When it is thus established, she undergoes the dreary persecution and imprisonment at the hands of Ravana. Every moment finds her repeating the name of Rama, her faith unshaken in her ultimate rescue. At the end she herself suggests the fiery ordeal, and goes through it with dauntless courage.

Then for one short year, as wife, and queen, and future mother, she tastes of entire earthly happiness, only to be swept away from her home again in the sternness of her husband's will for his people's good.

Through twenty years of acquiescent silence she keeps now, in all its fulness, that love that sent her first to share Rama's exile in the forest, and yet the perfection of her pride of womanhood is shown when she dies of the insult conveyed in a spoken doubt.

We believe vaguely that the power to renounce distinguishes the human from all like known to us; but a conception of renunciation so searching, so austere as this appals us. It is clear that a commanding philosophy of self-discipline lay behind, or the poet's hand could not have been so remorseless; but it is also clear that that philosophy was living in the heart and effort of the people, or Sita and Rama could not have been so loved.

We ask in vain what can have been the life of India before she found refuge and direction in such dreams as these. For to-day it has become so one with them that all trace of the dawn before they were is lost. They penetrate to every part of the country, every class of society, every grade of education. Journeying in the mountains at nightfall, one came upon the small open hut of the grain-dealer, and saw, round a tiny lamp, a boy reading the Ramayana in the vernacular to a circle of his elders. At the end of each stanza they bowed their heads to the earth, with the chant, "To dear Sita's bridegroom, great Rama, all hail!" The shopkeeper in the city counts out his wares to the customer, saying "One (Ram), two (Ram), three (Ram)," and so on, relapsing into a dream of worship when the measuring is done. Nay, once at least it is told how at the "Four (Ram)" the blessed name was enough to touch the inmost soul of him who uttered it, and he rose up then and there and left the world behind him. The woman terrified at

thunder calls on "Sita Ram!" and the bearers of the dead keep time to the cry of "Rama Nama Sattya hai!" ("The name of the Lord alone is real!")

What philosophy by itself could never have done for the humble, what the laws of Manu have done only in some small measure for the few, that the Epics have done through unnumbered ages and are doing still for all classes alike. They are the perpetual Hinduisers, for they are the ideal embodiments of that form of life, that conception of conduct, of which laws and theories can give but the briefest abstract, yet towards which the hope and effort of every Hindu child must be directed.

We are in the habit of talking of the changeless East; and, though there is a certain truth in the phrase, there is also a large element of fallacy. One of the most striking features of Hindu society during the past fifty years has been the readiness of the people to adopt a foreign form of culture and to compete with those who are native to that culture on equal terms. In medicine, in letters, in science, even in industry, where there has been opportunity, we are astonished at the intellectual adaptability of the race. Is the mere beckoning of the finger of the nineteenth century enough to subvert predilections as old as Babylon and Nineveh? we ask, amazed. By no means. Such changes as these are merely surface deep. The hauteur of the East lies in the very knowledge that its civilisation has nothing to fear from the social and intellectual experiments of its youngsters, or even from such complete changes of mental raiment as amongst newer peoples would constitute revolutions of thought, for the effort of Eastern civilisation has always been to the solitary end of moralising the

individual, and in this way it differs essentially from Western systems of culture, which have striven rather for the most efficient use of materials. If Alexander, capable of organising the largest number of his fellows most effectually for a combination of military, commercial, and scientific ends in that most difficult form, an armed expedition over hostile territory—if Alexander be taken as the type of Occidental genius, then, as the culminating example of the Oriental we must name Buddha; for clear and intense conceptions of perfect renunciation and inner illumination are the hidden springs of Hindu living, around which the home itself is built. These it is of which the Epics are the popular vehicles, these it is which give its persistence to Indian civilisation through the centuries, and this is why no examination syllabus, no alien's kindly inspiration, no foreigner's appreciation or contempt, can ever hope to have one iota of permanent influence on the national education at its core.

Reforming sects are very apt to reject what is much cultivated amongst the orthodox—the folk-lore that has grown up round the Epics in the Puranas and other literature. But to the poems themselves all cling fast. None fail to realise that they bear the mark of supreme literature, and so they remain a constant element, capable, like all great interpretations of life, of infinitely varied application, a treasure greater, because more greatly used, than any Anger of Achilles, or Descent into Purgatory, amongst them all.

Arthur Ruhl

THE FALL OF ANTWERP*

The storm which was to burst over Antwerp the following night was gathering fast when we arrived on Tuesday morning. Army motor trucks loaded with dismantled aeroplanes and the less essential impedimenta screamed through the streets bound away from, not toward, the front. The Queen, that afternoon, was seen in the Hotel St. Antoine receiving the good-byes of various friends. Consuls suddenly locked their doors and fled. And the cannon, rumbling along the eastern horizon as they had rumbled, nearer and nearer, for a fortnight, were now beyond the outer line of forts and within striking distance of the town.

That night, an hour or two after midnight, in my hotel by the water front, I awoke to the steady clatter of hoofs on cobblestones and the rumble of wheels. I went to the window, on the narrow side street, black as all streets had been in Antwerp since the night that the Zeppelin threw its first bombs, and looked out. It was a moonlight night, clear and cold, and there along the Quai St. Michael, at the end of the street, was an army in retreat. They were Belgians, battered and worn out with their unbroken weeks of hopeless fighting; cavalrymen on their tired horses, artillerymen, head sunk on their chests, drowsing on

* From *Collier's Weekly*, by kind permission of the publishers, Messrs. P. F. Collier & Sons, New York City, U. S. A

their lurching caissons; the patient little foot soldiers, rifles slung across their shoulders, scuffling along in their heavy overcoats.

In the dark shadow of the tall old houses a few people came out and stood there watching silently and, as one felt, in a sort of despair. All night long men were marching by—and in London they were still reading that it was but a “demonstration” the Germans were engaged in—down the quay and across the pontoon bridge—the only way over the Scheldt—over to the Tete de Flandre and the road to Ghent. They were strung along the street next morning, boots mud-covered, mud-stained, intrenching shovels hanging to their belts, faces unshaven for weeks, just as they had come from the trenches; yet still patient and cheerful, with that unshakable Flemish good cheer. Perhaps, after all, it was not a retreat; they might be swinging round to the south and St. Nicholas to attack the German flank.....

But before they had crossed, another army, a civilian army, flowed down on and over the quay. For a week people had been leaving Antwerp; now the general flight began. From villages to the east and south-east, from the city itself, people came pouring down. In waggons drawn by huge Belgian draft horses, in carts pulled by the captivating Belgian work dogs, panting mightily and digging their paws into the slippery cobbles; on foot, leading little children and carrying babies and dolls and canaries and great bundles of clothes and household things wrapped in sheets, they surged toward that one narrow bridge and the crowded ferryboats. I saw one old woman, gray-haired and tanned like an Indian squaw with work in the fields, yet with a

fine, well-made face, pushing a groaning wheelbarrow. A strap went from the handles over her shoulders, and, stopping now and then to ask the news, she would slip off this harness, gossip for a time, then push on again. That afternoon under my window there was a tall waggon, a sort of hay waggon, in which there were twenty-two little tow-headed children, none more than eight or ten, and several almost babies in arms. By the side of the waggon a man, evidently father of some of them, stood buttering the end of a huge round loaf of bread and cutting off slice after slice, which the older children broke and distributed to the little ones. Two cows were tied to the back of the waggon and the man's wife squatted there milking them. All along the quay and in the streets leading into it were people like this—harmless, helpless, hard-working people, going they knew not where. The entrance to the bridge was soon choked. One went away and returned an hour later and found the same people waiting almost in the same spot, and, with that wonderful calm and patience of theirs, feeding their children or giving a little of their precious hay to the horses, quietly waiting their turn while the cannon which had driven them from their homes kept on thundering behind them.

That afternoon I walked uptown through the shuttered, silent streets—silent but for that incessant rumbling in the south-east and the occasional honking flight of some military automobile—to two of the hospitals. In one, a British hospital on the Boulevard Léopold, the doctor in charge was absent for the moment, and there was no one to answer my offer of occasional help if an outsider could be of use. As I

sat waiting a tall, brisk Englishwoman, in nurse's uniform, came up and asked what I wanted. I told her.

"Oh," she said, and in her crisp English voice, without further ado, "will you help me with a leg?"

She led the way into her ward, and there we contrived between us to bandage and slip a board and pillow under a fractured thigh. Between whispers of "*Courage! Courage!* to the Belgian soldier, she said, that she was the wife of a British general and had two sons in the army and a third—"Poor boy!" she murmured, more to him than to me—on one of the ships in the North Sea. I arranged to come back next morning to help with the lifting, and went on to another hospital in the Rue Nerviens, to find that little English lady who crossed with us in the Ostend boat in August on the way to her sister's hospital in Antwerp.

Here in the quiet wards she had been working while the Germans swept down on Paris and were rolled back again, and while the little nation which she and her sister loved so well was being clubbed to its knees. Louvain, Liege, Malines, Namur—chapters in all the long, pitiless story were lying there in the narrow iron beds. There were men with faces chewed by shrapnel, men burned in the explosion of the powder magazine at Fort Waelhem when the attack on Antwerp began—dragged out from the underground passage in which the garrisons had sought momentary refuge and where most of them were killed, burned, and blackened. One strong, good-looking young fellow, able to eat and live apparently, was shot through the temples and blind in both eyes. It was the hour for carrying

those well enough to stand it out into the court and giving them their afternoon's airing and smoke. One had lost an arm, another, a whimsical young Belgian, had only the stump of a left leg. When we started to lift him back into his bed, he said he had a better way than that. So he put his arms round my neck and showed me how to take him by the back and the well leg.

• “*Bon!*” he said, and again! “*Bon*” when I let him down, and then reaching out and patting me on the back, “*Bon*” he smiled again. •

That night, behind drawn curtains which admitted no light to the street, we dined peacefully and well, and, except for this unwonted seclusion, just outside which were the black streets and still the endless procession of carts and waggons and shivering people, one might have forgotten, in that cheerfully lighted room, that we were not in times of peace. We even loitered over a grate fire before going to bed and talked in drowsy and almost indifferent fashion of whether it was absolutely sure that the Germans were trying to take the town.

It was almost exactly midnight that I found myself listening, half awake, to the familiar sound of distant cannon. One had come to think of it, almost, as nothing but a sound; and to listen with a detached and not unpleasant interest as a man tucked comfortably in bed follows a roll of thunder to its end or listens to the fall of rain.

It struck me suddenly that there was something new about this sound; I sat up in bed to listen, and that instant a far-off, sullen “*Boom!*” was followed by a crash as if lightning had struck a house a little way down the street. As I hurried to the window

there came another far-off detonation, a curious wailing whistle swept across the sky, and over behind the roofs to the left there was another crash.

One after another they came, at intervals of half a minute, or screaming on each other's heels as if racing to their goal. And then the crash or, if farther away, muffled explosion as another roof toppled in, or cornice dropped off, as a house made of canvas drops to pieces in a play.

The effect of those unearthly wails, suddenly singing in across country in the dead of night from six—eight—ten miles away—Heaven knows where—was, as the Germans intended it to be, tremendous. It is not easy to describe nor to be imagined by those who had not lived in that threatened city—the last Belgian stronghold—and felt that vast, unseen power rolling nearer and nearer. And now, all at once, it was here, materialised, demoniacal, a flying death, swooping across the dark into your very room.

It was like one of those dreams in which you cannot stir from your tracks, and meanwhile “ Boom!Tzee-ee-ee-ee!”—is this one meant for you?

Already there was a patter of feet in the dark, and people with white bundles on their backs went stumbling by toward the river and the bridge. Motors came honking down from the inner streets, and the quay, which had begun to clear by this time, was again jammed. I threw on some clothes, hurried to the street. A rank smell of kerosene hung in the air; presently a petrol shell burst to the southward, lighting up the sky for an instant like the flare from a blast furnace, and a few moments later there showed over the roofs the flames of the first fire.

Although we could hear the wail of shells flying across their wide parabola both into the town and out from the first ring of forts, few burst in our part of the city that night, and we walked up as far as the cathedral without seeing anything but black and silent streets. Every one in the hotel was up and dressed by this time. Some were for leaving at once; one family, piloted by the comfortable Belgian servants—far cooler than anyone else—went to the cellar, some gathered about the grate in the writing room to watch the night out; the rest of us went back to bed.

There wasn't much sleep for anyone that night. The bombardment kept on until morning, lulled slightly as if the enemy might be taking breakfast, then it continued into the next day. And now the city—a busy city of near four hundred thousand people—emptied itself in earnest. Citizens and soldiers, field guns, motor trucks, wheelbarrows, dogcarts, hayricks, baby carriages, droves of people on foot, all flowed down to the Scheldt, the ferries, and the bridge. They poured into coal barges, filling the yawning black holes as Africans used to fill slave ships, into launches and tugs, and along the roads leading down the river and south-westward toward Ostend.

One thought with a shudder of what would happen if the Germans dropped a few of their high explosive shells into that helpless mob, and it is only fair to remember that they did not, although retreating Belgian soldiers were a part of it, and one of the German aeroplanes, a mere speck against the blue, was looking calmly down overhead. Nor did they touch the cathedral, and their agreement not to shell any of the buildings previously pointed out on a map

delivered to them through the American Legation seemed to be observed.

Down through that mass of fugitives pushed a London motor-bus ambulance with several wounded British soldiers, one of them sitting upright, supporting with his right hand a left arm, the biceps, bound in a blood-soaked tourniquet, half torn away. They had come in from the trenches, where their comrades were now waiting, with their helpless little rifles, for an enemy miles away, who lay back at his ease and swept them with shrapnel. I asked them how things were going, and they said not very well. They could only wait until the German aeroplanes had given the range and the trenches became too hot, then fall back, dig themselves in, and play the same game over again.

Following them was a hospital-service motor car, driven by a Belgian soldier, and in charge of a clean-cut, soldierlike-appearing young British officer. It was his present duty to motor from trench to trench across the zone of fire, with the London bus trailing behind, and pick up wounded. It wasn't a particularly pleasant job, he said, jerking his head toward the distant firing, and frankly he wasn't keen about it. We talked for some time, everyone talked to everyone else in Antwerp that morning, and when he started out again I asked him to give me a lift to the edge of town. /

Quickly we raced through the Place de Meir and the deserted streets of the politer part of Antwerp, where, the night before, most of the shells had fallen. We went crackling over broken glass, past gaping cornices and holes in the pavement, five feet across and three feet deep, and once passed a house quietly burning away with none to so much as watch the

fire. The city wall, along which are the first line of forts, drew near, then the tunnel passing under it, and we went through without pausing and on down the road to Malines. We were beyond the town now, bowling rapidly out into the flat Belgian country and clinging there to the running board, with the October wind blowing quite through a thin flannel suit, it suddenly came over me that things had moved very fast in the last five minutes, and then all at once, in some unexpected fashion, all that elaborate barrier of *laissez-passeurs sauf-conduits*, and so on, had been swept aside, and, quite as if it were the most ordinary thing in the world, I was spinning out to that almost mythical "front."

Front, indeed! It was two fronts. There was an explosion just behind us, a hideous noise overhead, as if the whole zenith had somehow been ripped across like a tightly stretched piece of silk, and a shell from the Belgian fort under which we had just passed went hurtling down long aisles of air—further—further—to end in a faint detonation miles away.

Out of sight in front of us, there was an answering thud, and—"Tzee-ee-ee-er-r-r-BONG!"—a German shell had gone over us and burst behind the Belgian fort. Under this gigantic antiphony the motor car raced along, curiously small and irrelevant on that empty country road.

We passed great holes freshly made—craters five or six feet across and three feet deep, neatly blown out of the macadam—then a dead horse. There were plenty of dead horses along the roads in France, but they had been so for days. This one's blood was not yet dry, and the shell that had torn the great rip in its chest must have struck here this morning.

We turned into the avenue of trees leading up to an empty château, a field hospital until a few hours before. Mattresses and bandages littered the deserted room, and an electric chandelier was still burning. The young officer pointed to some trenches in the garden. "I had those dug to put the wounded in in case we had to hold the place," he said. "It was getting pretty hot."

There was nothing here now, however, and, followed by the London bus with its obedient enlisted men doing duty as ambulance orderlies, we motored a mile or so further on to the nearest trench. It was in an orchard beside a brick farmhouse, with a vista in front of barbed-wire entanglement and a carefully cleaned firing field stretching out to a village and trees about half a mile away. They had looked very interesting and difficult, those barbed-wire mazes and suburbs ruthlessly swept of trees and houses, when I had seen the Belgians preparing for the siege six weeks before, and they were to be of about as much practical use now as pictures on a wall.

There are, it will be recalled, three lines of forts about Antwerp—the inner one, corresponding to the city's wall; a middle one a few miles further out, where the British now were, and the outer line, which the enemy had already passed. Their artillery was hidden far over behind the horizon trees, and the British marines and naval reserve men who manned these trenches could only wait there, rifle in hand, for an enemy that would not come, while a captive balloon a mile or two away to the eastward and an aeroplane sailing far overhead gave the ranges, and they waited for the shrapnel to burst. The trenches were narrow and shoulder deep, very like trenches

for gas or water pipes, and reasonably safe except when a shell burst directly overhead. One had struck that morning just on the inner rim of the trench, blown out one of those craterlike holes, and discharged all its shrapnel backward across the trench and into one of the heavy timbers supporting a bombproof roof. A raincoat hanging to a nail in this timber was literally shot to shreds. "That's where I was standing," said the young lieutenant in command, pointing with a dry smile to a spot not more than a yard away from where the shell had burst.

Half a dozen young fellows, crouched there in the bombproof, looked out at us and grinned. They were brand-new soldiers, some of them, boys from the London streets who had answered the thrilling posters and signs, "Your King and Country Need You," and been sent on this ill-fated expedition for their first sight of war. The London papers are talking about it as I am writing this—how this handful of nine thousand men, part of them recruits who scarcely knew one end of a rifle from another, were flung across the Channel on Sunday night and rushed up to the front to be shot at and rushed back again. I did not know this then, but wondered if this was what they had dreamed of—squatting helplessly in a ditch until another order came to retire—when they swung through the London streets singing "It's a long, long way to Tipperary" two months ago.

Yet not one of the youngest and the greenest showed the least nervousness as they waited there in that melancholy little orchard under the incessant scream of shells. That unshakable British coolness, part sheer pluck, part a sort of lack of imagination, perhaps, or at least of "nerves," left them as calm

and casual as if they were but drilling on the turf of Hyde Park. And with it persisted that almost equally unshakable sense of class, that touching confidence in one's superiors—the young clerk's or mechanic's inborn conviction that whatever that smart, clean-cut, imperturbable young officer does and says must inevitably be right—at least that if he is cool and serene you must, if the skies fall, be cool and serene too.

We met one young fellow as we walked through an empty lateral leading to a bombproof prepared for wounded, and the ambulance officer asked him sharply how things had been going that morning.

"Oh, very well, sir," he said with the most respectful good humour, though a shell bursting just then a stone's throw beyond the orchard made both of us duck our heads. "A bit hot, sir, about nine o'clock, but only one man hurt. They do seem to know just where we are, sir; but wait till their infantry comes up—we'll clean them out right enough, sir."

And if he had been ordered to stay there and hold the trench alone, one could imagine him saying in that same tone of deference and good humour: "Yes, sir; thank you, sir," and staying, too, till the cows came home.

We motored down the line to another trench—this one along a road with fields in front and about a couple of hundred yards behind a clump of trees which masked a Belgian battery. The officer here, a tall, up-standing, gravely handsome young man, with a deep, strong, slightly humorous voice, and the air of one both born to and used to command—the best type of navy man—came over to meet us, rather

glad, it seemed, to see someone. The ambulance officer had just started to speak when there was a roar from the clump of trees, at the same instant an explosion directly overhead, and an ugly chunk of iron—a bit of broken casing from a shrapnel shell—plunged at our very feet. The shell had been wrongly timed and exploded prematurely.

“ I say ! ” the lieutenant called out to a Belgian officer standing not far away, “ can’t you telephone over to your people to stop that. That is the third time we’ve been nearly hit by their shrapnel this morning. After all ”—he turned to us with the air of apologising somewhat for his display of irritation—“ it’s quite annoying enough here without that, you know.”

It was indeed, annoying—very. The trenches were not under fire in the sense that the enemy were making a persistent effort to clear them out, but they were in the zone of fire, their range was known, and there was no telling when that distant boom thudded across the fields whether that particular shell might be intended for them or for somebody’s house in town. We could see in the distance their captive balloon, and there were a couple of scouts, the officer said, in a tower in the village, not much more than half a mile away. He pointed to the spot across the barbed wire. “ We’ve been trying to pick them off with our rifles for the last half hour.”

We left them engaged in this interesting distraction, the little rifle snaps in all that mighty thundering seeming only to accept the loneliness and helplessness of their position, and spun on down the transverse road, toward another trench on the left. The progress of the motor seemed slow and

disappointing. Not that the spot a quarter of a mile off was at all less likely to be hit, yet one felt conscious of a growing desire to be somewhere else. And though I took off my hat to keep it from blowing off, I found that every time a shell went over I promptly put it on again, indicating, one suspected, a decline in what the military experts call *morale*.

As we bowled down the road toward a group of brick houses on the left, a shell passed not more than fifty yards in front of us and through the side of one of these houses as easily as a circus rider pops through a tissue-paper hoop. Almost at the same instant another exploded—where I haven't the least idea, except that the dust from it hit us in the face. The motor rolled smoothly along meanwhile, and the Belgian soldier driving it stared as imperturbably ahead of him as if he were back at Antwerp on the seat of his taxicab.

You get used to shells in time, it seems, and, deciding that you either are or are not going to be hit, dismiss responsibility and leave it all to fate. I must admit that in my brief experience I was not able to arrive at this restful state. We reached at last the city gate through which we had left Antwerp and the motor came to a stop just at the inner edge of the passage under the fort, and I said good-bye to the young Englishman ere he started back for the trenches again.

“Well,” he called after me as I started across the open space between the gate and the houses, a stone's throw away, “you’ve had an experience anyway.”

I was just about to answer that undoubtedly I had when—“*Tzee-ee-ee-er-r*”—a shell just cleared

the ramparts over our heads and disappeared in the side of a house directly in front of us with a roar and a geyser of dust. Neither the motor nor a guest's duty now detained me and, waving him good-bye, I turned at right angles and made with true civilian-speed for the shelter of a side street.

The shells all appeared to be coming from a south-east direction, and in the lee of houses on the south-side of the street one was reasonably protected. Keeping close to the house fronts and dodging—rather absurdly no doubt—into doorways when that wailing whistle came up from behind, I went zig-zagging through the deserted city toward the hotel on the other side of town.

It was such a progress as one might make in some fantastic nightmare—as the hero of some eerie piece of fiction about the Last Man in the World. Street after street, with doors locked, shutters closed, sandbags, mattresses, or little heaps of earth piled over cellar windows; streets in which the only sound was that of one's own feet, where the loneliness was made more lonely by some forgotten dog cringing against the closed door and barking nervously as one hurried past.

Here, where most of the shells had fallen the preceding night, nearly all the houses were empty. Yet occasionally one caught sight of faces peering up from basement windows or of some stubborn householder standing in his southern doorway staring into space. Once I passed a woman bound away from, instead of toward, the river with her big bundle; and once an open carriage with a family in it driving, with peculiarly Flemish composure, toward the quay; and as I hurried past the park, along the

Avenue Van Dyck—where fresh craters made by exploding shells had been dug in the turf—the swans, still floating on the little lake, placidly dipped their white necks under water as if it were a quiet morning in May.

Now and then, as the shell's wail swung over its long parabola, there came with the detonation, across the roofs, the rumble of falling masonry. Once I passed a house quietly burning, and on the pavement were looped-off trees. The impartiality with which those far-off gunners distributed their attentions was disconcerting. Peering down one of the up-and-down streets before crossing it, as if a shell were an automobile which you might see and dodge, you would shoot across and, turning into a cozy little side street, think to yourself that here at least they had not come, and then promptly see, squarely in front, another of those craters blown down through the Belgian blocks.

Presently I found myself under the trees of the Boulevard Léopold, not far from the British hospital, and recalled that it was about time that promise was made good. It was time indeed, and help with lifting they needed very literally. The order had just come to leave the building, bringing the wounded and such equipment as they could pack into half a dozen motor busses, and retire—just where, I did not hear—in the direction of Ghent. As I entered the port-ecochère two poor wrecks of war were being led out by their nurses—more men burned in the powder explosion at Waelhem, their seared faces and hands covered with oil and cotton just as they had been lifted from bed.

The phrase " whistle of shells " had taken on a new reality since midnight. Now one was to learn something of the meaning of those equally familiar words, " they succeeded in saving their wounded although under heavy fire."

None of the wounded could walk, none dress himself; most of them in ordinary times would have lain where they were for weeks. There were fractured legs not yet set, men with faces half shot away, men half out of their heads, and all these had to be dressed somehow, covered up, crowded into or on top of the busses and started off through a city under bombardment toward open country, which might already be occupied by the enemy.

Bundles of uniforms, mud-stained, blood-stained, just as they had come from the trenches, were dumped out of the storeroom and distributed, hit or miss.

British " Tommies " went out as Belgians, Belgians in British khaki; the man whose broken leg I had lifted the day before we simply bundled in his bed blankets and set up in the corner of a bus. One healthy-looking Belgian boy, on whom I was trying to pull a pair of British trousers, seemed to have nothing at all the matter with him, until it presently appeared that he was speechless, and paralysed in both left arm and left leg. And while we were working, an English soldier shot through the jaw and throat sat on the edge of his bed, shaking with a hideous rattling cough.

The hospital was in a handsome stone building, in ordinary times a club, perhaps, or a school; a wide stone stairway led up the centre, and above it was a glass skylight. This centre well would have been a charming place for a shell to drop into, and

one did drop not more than fifty feet or so away, in or close to the rear court. A few yards down the avenue another shall hit a cornice and sent a ton or so of masonry crashing down on the sidewalk. Under conditions like these the nurses kept running up and down that staircase during the endless hour or two in which the wounded were being dressed and carried on stretchers to the street. They stood by the busses making their men comfortable, and when the first busses were filled, they sat in the open street on top of them, patiently waiting, as calm and smiling as circus queens on their gilt chariots. The behaviour of the men in the trenches was cool enough, but they at least were fighting men and but taking the chance of war. These were civilian volunteers, they had not even trenches to shelter them, and it took a rather unforeseen and difficult sort of courage to leave that fairly safe masonry building and sit smiling and helpful on top of a motor bus during a wait of half an hour or so, any second of which might be one's last.

There was an American nurse, there a tall, radiant girl, whom they called, and rightly, "Morning Glory," who had been introduced to me the day before because we both belonged to that curious foreign race of Americans. What her name was I haven't the least idea, and if we were to meet to-morrow, doubtless we should have to be carefully presented over again, but I remember calling out to her, "Good-bye, American girl!" as we passed in the hall during the last minute or two, and she said good-bye, and suddenly reached out and put her hand on my shoulder and added, "Good luck!" or "God bless you!" or something like that. And these seemed

at the moment quite the usual things to do and say. The doctor in charge and the general's wife apologised for running away, as they called it, and the last I saw of the latter was as she waved back to me from the top of a bus, with just that look of concern over the desperate ride they were beginning which a slightly preoccupied hostess casts over a dinner table about which are seated a number of oddly assorted guests.

The strange procession got away safely at last, and safely, too, so I was told later, across the river; but where they finally spent the night I never heard.*

I hurried down the street and into the Rue Nerviens. It must have been about 4 o'clock by that time. The bright October morning had changed to a chill and dismal afternoon, and up the western sky in the direction of the river a vast curtain of greasy black smoke was rolling. The petrol tanks which stretched for half a mile or so along the Scheldt had been set afire. It looked at the moment as if the whole city might be going, but there was no time then to think of possibilities, and I slipped down the lee side of the street to the door with the Red Cross flag. The front of the hospital was shut tight. It took several pulls at the bell to bring anyone, and inside I found a Belgian family, who had left their own house for the thicker ceilings of the hospital, and the nuns back in the wards with their nervous men.

Their servants had left that morning; the three or four sisters in charge had to do all the cooking and housework as well as look after their patients, and now they were keeping calm and smiling to subdue as best they could the fears of the Belgian wounded, who were ready to jump out of bed, whatever their condition, rather than fall into the hands of the

enemy. Each one had no doubt that if he were not murdered outright he would be taken to Germany and forced to fight in the east against the Russians. Several, who know very well what was going on outside, had been found by the nurses that morning out of bed and all ready to take to the street.

Lest they should hear that their comrades in the Boulevard Léopold had been moved, the lay sister—the English lady—and I withdrew to the operating room, closed the door, and in that curious retreat talked over the situation. No orders had come to leave; in fact, they had been told to stay. They did have a man now in the shape of the Belgian gentleman, and from the same source an able-bodied servant, but how long these would stay, where food was to be found in that desolate city, when the bombardment would cease, and what the Germans would do with them—well, it was not a pleasant situation for a handful of women. But it was not of themselves she was thinking, but of their wounded and of Belgium, and of what both had suffered already and of what might yet be in store. It was of that this frail little sister talked that hopeless afternoon, while the smoke in the west spread farther up the sky, and she would now and then pause in the middle of a syllable while a shell sang overhead, then take it up again.

Meanwhile the light was going, and before it became quite dark and my hotel deserted, perhaps, as the rest of Antwerp, it seemed best to be getting across town. I could not believe that the Germans could treat such a place and people with anything but consideration and told the little nurse so. She came to the edge of the glass-covered court,

laughingly saying I had best run across it, and wondering where we, who had met twice now under such curious circumstances, would meet again. Then she turned back to the ward—to wait with that roomful or more or less panicky men for the tramp of German soldiers and the knock on the door which meant that they were prisoners.

Hurrying across town, I passed not far from the Hotel St. Antoine, a blazing four-storey building, nearly burned out now, and, like the other Antwerp fires, not spreading beyond its four walls. The cathedral was not touched, and indeed, in spite of the noise and terror, the material damage was comparatively slight. Soldiers were clearing the quay and setting a guard directly in front of our hotel—one of the few places in Antwerp that night where one could get so much as a crust of bread—and behind drawn curtains as usual we made what cheer we could. There were two American photographers and a correspondent who had spent the night before in the cellar of a house, the upper storey of which had been wrecked by a shell; a British intelligence officer, with the most bewildering way of hopping back and forth between a brown civilian suit and a spick-and-span new uniform, and several Belgian families hoping to get a boat downstream in the morning.

We sat round the great fire in the hall, above which the architect, building for happier times, had had the bad grace to place a skylight; and discussed the time and means of getting away. The intelligence officer, not wishing to be made a prisoner, was for getting a boat of some sort at the first crack of dawn, and the photographers, who had had the roof blown off over their heads, heartily agreed with him. I did

not like to leave without at least a glimpse of those spiked helmets nor to desert my friends in the Rue Nerviens, and yet there was the likelihood, if one remained, of being marooned indefinitely in the midst of the conquering army.

Meanwhile the flight of shells continued, a dozen or more fires could be seen from the upper windows of the hotel, and billows of red flame from the burning petrol tanks rolled up the southern sky. It had been what might be called a rather full day, and the wail of approaching projectiles began to get a bit on one's nerves. One started at the slamming of a door, took every dull thump for a distant explosion, and when we finally turned in I carried the mattress from my room, which faced the south, over the other side of the building and laid it on the floor beside another man's bed. Before a shell could reach me it would have to traverse at least three partitions and possibly him as well.

After midnight the bombardment quieted, but shells continued to visit us from time to time all night. All night the Belgians were retreating across the pontoon bridge, and once—it must have been about 2 or 3 o'clock—I heard a sound which meant that all was over. It was the crisp tramp—different from the Belgian shuffle—of British soldiers, and up from the street came an English voice, "Best foot forward, boys!" and a little farther on, "Look alive, men: they've just picked up our range!"

I went to the window and watched them tramp by—the same men we had seen that morning. The petrol fire was still flaming across the south, a steamer of some sort was burning at her wharf beside the bridge—Napoleon's veterans retreating from Moscow

could scarcely have left behind a more complete picture of war than did those young recruits.

Morning came dragging up out of that dreadful night, smoky, damp, and chill. It was almost a London fog that lay over the abandoned town. I had just packed up and was walking through one of the upper halls when there was a crash that shook the whole building, the sound of falling glass, and out in the river a geyser of water shot up, timbers and boards flew from the bridge, and there were dozens of smaller splashes as if from a shower of shot. I thought that the hotel was hit at last, and that the Germans, having let civilians escape over the bridge, were turning everything loose, determined to make an end of the business. It was, as a matter of fact, the Belgians blowing up the bridge to cover their retreat. In any case it seemed useless to stay longer, and within an hour, on a tug jammed with the last refugees, we were starting downstream.

Behind us, up the river, a vast curtain of lead-coloured smoke from the petrol tanks had climbed up the sky and spread out mushroom-wise, as smoke and ashes sometimes spread out from a volcano. This smoke, merging with the fog and the smoke from the Antwerp fires, seemed to cover the whole sky. And under that sullen mantle the dark flames of the petrol still glowed; to the left was the blazing skeleton of the ship, and on the right Antwerp itself, the rich, old, beautiful, comfortable city, all but hidden, and now and then sending forth the boom of an exploding shell like a groan.

A large empty German steamer, the *Gneisenau*, marooned here since the war, came swinging slowly out into the river, pushed by two or three nervous

little tugs—to be sunk there, apparently, in mid-stream. From the pontoon bridge which stubbornly refused to yield, came explosion after explosion, and up and down the river fires sprung up, and there were other explosions, as the crushed Belgians, in a sort of rage of devastation, became their own destroyers.

By following the adventures of one individual I have endeavoured to suggest what the bombardment of a modern city was like—what you might expect if an invading army came to-morrow to New York or Chicago or San Francisco. I have only coasted along the edges of Belgium's tragedy, and the rest of the story, of which we were a part for the next two days—the flight of those hundreds of thousands of homeless people—is something that can scarcely be told—you must follow it out in imagination into its countless uprooted, disorganised lives. You must imagine old people struggling alone over miles and miles of country roads; young girls, under burdens a man might not care to bear, tramping until they had to carry their shoes in their hands and go barefooted to rest their unaccustomed feet. You must imagine the pathetic efforts of hundreds of people to keep clean by washing in wayside streams or ditches; imagine babies going without milk because there was no milk to be had; families shivering in damp hedgerows or against haystacks where darkness overtook them; and you must imagine this not on one road, but on every road, for mile after mile over a whole countryside. What was to become of these people when their little supply of food was exhausted? Where could they go? Even if back to their homes, it would be but to lift their hats to their conquerors, never to know but that the

next week or month would sweep the tide of war back over them again.

Never in modern times, not in our generation at least, has the world seen anything like that flight—nothing so strange, so overwhelming, so pitiful. And when I say pitiful, you must not think of hysterical women, desperate, trampling men, tears and screams. In all those miles one saw neither complaining nor protestation—at times one might almost have thought it some vast eccentric picnic. No, it was their orderliness, their thrift and kindness, their unmistakable usefulness, which made the waste and irony of it all so colossal and hideous. Each family had its big round loaves of bread and its pile of hay for the horses, the bags of pears and potatoes, the children had their little dolls, and you would see some tired mother with her big bundle under one arm and some fluffy little puppy in the other, you could not associate them with forty-centimetre shells or burned churches and libraries or anything but quiet homes and peaceable, helpful lives. You could not be swept along by that endless stream of exiles and retain at the end of the day any particular enthusiasm for the red glory of war. And when he crossed the Dutch border that afternoon and came on a village street full of Belgian soldiers cut off and forced to cross the line, to be interned here, presumably until the war was over, one could not mourn very deeply their lost chances of martial glory as they unslung their rifles and turned them over to the good-natured Dutch guard. They had held back that avalanche long enough, these Belgians, and one felt as one would to see lost children get home again or some one dragged from under the wheels.

